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THE HOMILIST.

CONDUCTED BY

DAVID THOMAS, D.D.,

AUTHOR OF THE "BIBLICAL LITURGY," "CRISIS OF BEING," "CORE OF CREEDS," "PROGRESS OF BEING," "RESURRECTIONS," &c., &c.

VOL. X. THIRD SERIES.

VOLUME XXI. FROM COMMENCEMENT.



"THE LETTER KILLETH BUT THE SPIRIT GIVETH LIFE."—*Paul.*

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PREFACE.

THIS Volume is the tenth of the *Third Series* of the work. The only difference between this and the preceding series consists in its enlarged size and half-yearly issue.

As the old key-note will still rule the melodies of the "Homilist," and no new specific description is requisite, the former preface may be again transcribed.

"First: The book has no *finish*. The Editor has not only not the time to give an artistic finish to his productions, but not even the *design*. Their incompleteness is *intentional*. He has drawn some marble slabs together, and hewn them roughly, but has left other hands to delineate minute features, and so polish them into beauty. He has dug up from the Biblical mine some precious ore, smelted a little, but left all the smithing to others. He has presented 'germs,' which, if sown in good soil, under a free air and an open sky, will produce fruit that may draw many famishing spirits into the vineyard of the Church.

"Secondly: The book has no *denominationalism*. It has no special reference to 'our body,' or to 'our Church.' As denominational strength is not necessarily *soul* strength, nor denominational religion necessarily the religion of humanity, it is the aim of the 'Homilist' to minister that which universal man requires. It is for man as a citizen of the universe, and not for him as the limb of a sect.

"Thirdly: The book has no *polemical Theology*. The Editor—holding, as he does, with a tenacious grasp, the *cardinal* doctrines which

constitute what is called the 'orthodox creed'—has, nevertheless, the deep and ever-deepening conviction, first, that such creed is but a very small portion of the truth that God has revealed, or that man requires; and that no theological system can fully represent all the contents and suggestions of the great book of God; and, secondly, that systematic theology is but means to an end. *Spiritual morality is that end.* Consequently, to the *heart and life* every Biblical thought and idea should be directed. Your systems of divinity the author will not disparage; but his impression is, that they can no more answer the purpose of the Gospel, than *pneumatics* can answer the purpose of the atmosphere. In the case of Christianity, as well as the air, the world can live without its scientific truths; but it must have the free flowings of their vital elements. Coleridge has well said, 'Too soon did the doctors of the Church forget that the heart—the moral nature—was the beginning and the end; and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion.'

"The Editor would record his grateful acknowledgments to those free spirits of all churches, who have so earnestly rallied round him, to the many who have encouraged him by their letters, and to those, especially, who have aided him by their valuable contributions. May the 'last day' prove that the help rendered has been worthily bestowed; and that the 'Homilist' did something towards the spiritual education of humanity, in its endeavours to bring the Bible, through the instrumentality of the pulpit, into a more immediate and practical contact with the every-day life of man!"

DAVID THOMAS.

Loughborough Park, Brixton.

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A HOMILY

ON

Manasseh; or, The Material and the Moral in Human Life.

“Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign; and he reigned fifty and five years in Jerusalem.”—2 Chron. xxxiii. 1.

THERE are two great mistakes prevalent amongst men, one is an over-estimation of the secular, the other a depreciation of the spiritual. Many theoretically hold, and more practically indicate, that man should attend mainly, if not entirely, to his secular interests, as a citizen of time; that the present, the palpable, and the certain, should engage a far greater portion of his attention than the future, the unseen, and the probable. It is bad to hold these ideas, but it is worse to practise them. More respect, perhaps, is due to the mistaken men who theoretically adopt them than to those who denounce in no very measured terms their votaries, and yet practically carry them out in their daily life. And yet such characters abound in Christian England, abound in our congregations, and in our churches too. The religionist who gives more of his thought, energies, and time, to the secular than the spiritual, is carrying out in his every-day conduct the principles of those secular and infidel teachers against whom he is ever ready to

thunder his condemnation. Far more distressed am I at the practical secularism of the Church than at the theoretical secularism of the sceptic. The other mistake is, overrating the spiritual at the expense of the secular. It is not very uncommon for religious teachers to profess to despise secular interests, and so to enforce the claims of piety as if they required the sacrifice of our corporeal and secular happiness. I have no faith in such representations of moral duty. Man is one, and all his duties and interests are concurrent and harmonious ; the end of Christianity is to make men happy body and soul, here and hereafter.

These remarks are suggested by the history of Manasseh now lying before us, a history which may be thus summarised :—He was the son of Hezekiah ; was born upwards of seven hundred years before Christ ; began to reign when he was twelve years of age ; continued his rulership for fifty-five years ; died at the age of sixty-eight, and was buried in a sepulchre which he had prepared for himself in his own garden. (See 2 Kings xxi. 1—16 ; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1—20.) His inner life or character will appear as we proceed in the illustration of our subject. In his biography we have three instructive views of the *secular* and the *spiritual*. We have here—

I. THE ELEVATION OF THE SECULAR AND THE DEGRADATION OF THE SPIRITUAL. Here is a man at the height of secular elevation. He is raised to a throne, called to sway his sceptre over a people the most enlightened, and in a country the most fertile and lovely on the face of the earth. In the person of this Manasseh, you have secular greatness in its highest altitude and most attractive position. But in connection with this you have spiritual degradation. Penetrate the gaudy trappings of royalty, look within, and what see you ? A low, wretched, infamous spirit, a spirit debased almost to the lowest point in morals. Few names in the history of our sinful world stand out with more prominent features of depravity and vice than this Manasseh. Look at him *socially*.

How acted he as a son? His father, Hezekiah, was a man of undoubted piety—a monarch of distinguished worth. Many earnest prayers he had offered, no doubt, for his son, and many tender counsels on religious subjects had he addressed to him. Yet what was the return for all this? His sire was scarcely cold in his grave, before the son commenced undoing in the kingdom all that his pious father had for years endeavoured to accomplish. "*He built up again the high place which Hezekiah his father had destroyed, and he reared up altars for Baal, and made a grove, as did Ahab king of Israel; and worshipped all the hosts of heaven, and served them.*" His insane fanaticism in the cause of idolatry was not surpassed even by the king in modern times who most resembled him, Philip II. of Spain. How did he act as a parent? Was he anxious for the virtue and happiness of his children? No, "he caused his children to pass through the fire of the son of Hinnom." History represents the god Moloch, to which this Manasseh presented his children, as a brazen statue, which was ever kept red-hot, with its arms outstretched. Into these red-hot outstretched arms the idolatrous parent threw his children, which soon fell down a flaming mass into the raging furnace beneath. Look at him *religiously*—dupe of the most stupid imposture. "He observed times and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with wizards." He was the maddened votary of the most cruel and monstrous superstition. Look at him *politically* ruining his country, provoking the indignation of heaven. "*So Manasseh made Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the heathen, whom the Lord had destroyed before the children of Israel.*" This elevation of the secular, and the degradation of the spiritual, so manifest in the life of this monarch, and so manifest, alas, in all time and lands, is not destitute of many grave and startling suggestions. First: *It shows the moral disorganisation of the human world.* This state of things can never be, according to the original plan of the creation. Can it be accordant with the original

purpose of the Creator, that Wickedness should sit on thrones and hold the sceptres of the world in its grasp? Can it be that infinite Purity, intended to endow depravity with such worldly wealth and power? Impossible. A terrible convulsion has happened to the human world; a convulsion that has thrown every part in disorder. "*All the foundations of the earth are out of course.*" The social world is in a moral chaos. The Bible traces the cause, and propounds the remedy of this terrible disorganisation. Secondly: *It shows the perverting capability of the soul.* The greater the amount of worldly good a man possess, the stronger is the appeal of the Creator for his gratitude and devotion. These earthly mercies urge self-consecration. Moreover, the larger the amount of worldly wealth and power, the greater the facilities as well as the obligations to a life of spiritual intelligence, holiness, and piety. But here, in the case of this monarch, you have, what indeed you find, in different degrees, everywhere in human life, past and present, the soul turning these advantages to the most fiendish iniquity. The perverting capability of the soul within us, may well fill us with amazement and alarm. We can mantle the stars of truth with midnight, make the tree of life drop poison, and cause the very breath of God to be pestilential. Thirdly: *It shows the high probability of a judgment.* Under the government of a righteous monarch, will vice always have its banquets, its purple, and its crown? Will the Great Mechanician always allow the human engine thus to ply its wondrous energies in confusion? Will the great Lord allow his stewards to misappropriate his substance, and never call them to account? It cannot be! There must come a day for balancing long-standing accounts; a day for making all that has been irregular in human history chime harmoniously with the original law of the universe. We have here—

II. THE DEGRADATION OF THE SECULAR, AND THE ELEVATION OF THE SPIRITUAL. The judgment of God, which must ever follow sin, at length overtook the wicked monarch. The Assyrian army, under the direction of Esauhaddon, invaded

the country, and carried all before it. The miserable monarch quits his palace and his throne, flies in terror for his life, and conceals himself in a thorn brake. Here he is discovered. He is bound in chains, transported to Babylon, and there cast into prison. Here is secular degradation. Here, away in exile, chains, and prison, like the prodigal, he began to think. His guilty conduct passed under sad review—memory brought past crimes and abused mercies in awful and startling forms before him, and his heart is smitten with contrition. He prays, his prayers are heard, and here, bereft of every vestige of secular greatness, he begins to rise spiritually; to rise as an intellectual and moral man. We may learn from this—

First: *That man's circumstances are no necessary hindrances to conversion.* If the question were asked, What circumstances are the most inimical to the cultivation of piety? I should unhesitatingly answer—*Adversity.* I am well aware indeed that adversity, as in the case before us, often succeeds in inducing religious thoughtfulness and penitence when prosperity has failed—that afflictions have often broke the moral slumber of the soul, and lead the careless to consider his ways. But, notwithstanding this, I cannot regard adversity itself as the most suited to the cultivation of the religious character. Sufferings are inimical to that grateful feeling and spiritual effort which religious culture requires. It is when the system bounds with health, when Providence smiles on the path, when the mind is not necessarily pressed with anxieties about the means of worldly subsistence, when leisure and facilities for religious reflection and effort are at command, that men are in the best position to discipline themselves into a godly life. But here we find a man in the most unfavourable circumstances—away from religious institutions, and friends, and books, an iron-bound exile in a pagan land—beginning to think of his ways, and directing his feet into the paths of holiness. Such a case as this meets all the excuses which men offer for their want of religion. It is often said, "Were we in such and such circumstances, we would be religious." The rich man says, "Were

I in humble life, more free from the anxieties, cares, responsibilities, and associations of my position, I would live a godly life ;" whilst the poor, on the other hand, says, with far more reason, " Were my spirit not pressed down by the crushing forces of poverty ; had I sufficient of worldly goods to remove me from all necessary anxiety, I would give my mind to religion, and serve my God." The man in the midst of the excitement and bustle of commercial life, says, " Were I in a more retired situation, in some rural region away from the eternal din of business—away in quiet fields, and under clear skies, amidst the music of birds and brooks, I would serve my Maker." Whilst, on the contrary, and with greater reason, the tenant of these quiet scenes, says, " Were I distant from this eternal monotony, amidst scenes of mental stimulus and social excitement, I should be roused from the apathy which oppresses me, and I would be a religious man." The fact, after all, is that circumstances are no necessary hindrances or helps to a religious life. We may also learn from this—

Secondly : *That Heaven's mercy is greater than man's iniquities.* When conscience-stricken with the enormity of his wickedness, this one of the chief of human sinners betakes himself to his knees in humble prayer, " before the God of his fathers" how is he treated ? Is he scathed with a flash of retributive displeasure ? Who would have wondered if he had been so ? But, no. Is he upbraided for his past wickedness ? Who would have been surprised if he had been stunned with thunders of reproof ? But, no. Is he received with cold indifference ? No. "*He was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Jerusalem into his kingdom.*" What a confirmation is here of that promise, " Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Abundantly ! This is a glorious word, a word that, like the boundless heavens of God, towers and expands over a universe of sin. We have further in this man's life—

III. THE CONCURRENT ELEVATION BOTH OF THE SPIRITUAL AND THE SECULAR. The Almighty hears his prayer. He is emancipated from his bondage, brought back to his own country, and restored to the throne of Israel. There he is now with a true heart, in a noble position—a real great man occupying a great office. This is a rare scene ; and yet the only scene in accordance with the real constitution of things and the will of God. It seems to me that if man had remained in innocence, his outward position would always have been the product and type of his inner soul ; that he who got a throne, would do so because of the moral nobility of his nature, and that in all cases secular circumstances, whether elevated, affluent, or otherwise, would ever be the effects and exponents of spiritual character. Manasseh's restoration to the throne, and the work of reformation to which he sets himself, suggests two subjects for thought. First : *The tendency of godliness to promote man's secular elevation.* The monarch comes back in spirit to God, and God brings him back to his throne. As the material condition of men depend upon their moral, improve the latter, and you improve the former. As the world gets spiritually holier, it will get secularly happier. Godliness is material, as well as moral "gain." The system that best promotes godliness is the system that best promotes man's temporal well-being ; and that system is the Gospel. Hence, let philanthropists adopt this as their grand instrument. When Christianity shall have won its triumphs over all souls, men's bodies will be restored to their lost inheritance of health, elasticity, force, and plenty, as Manasseh was now restored to his lost throne. There is a physical millennium for the world as well as a spiritual ; the former will grow out of and reveal the latter, as trees and flowers their hidden life. Another thing suggested by the restoration of this monarch to his throne, and the work he set himself too, is—Secondly : *The tendency of penitence to make restitution.* Concerning Manasseh it is thus written : "Now, after this he built a wall without the city of David, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entering in at the

fish-gate, and compassed about Ophel, and raised it up a very great height, and put captains of war in all the fenced cities of Judah. And he took away the strange gods, and the idol out of the house of the Lord, and all the altars that he had built in the house of the Lord, and in Jerusalem, and cast them out of the city. And he repaired the altar of the Lord, and sacrificed thereon peace-offerings and thank-offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the Lord God of Israel." Here is restitution, and an earnest endeavour to undo the mischief which he had wrought. Thus Zaccheus acted, and thus all true penitents have ever acted and will ever act. True penitence has a restitutionary instinct. But how little, alas! of the mischief done can ever be undone? What can we do? We cannot destroy the fact of wrong. That fact will never be erased from the moral annals of the universe; it is chronicled with unfadable ink on an imperishable substance. What can we do? We cannot destroy the influence of our wrong. The wrong that is gone out from us will roll its pestilential streams down the ages. What can we do? We can "cease to do evil," and, thank God! we can do more; we can make some compensation for the injury we have done the creation. We can by Heaven's grace open up within us a fountain for the washing away of sin and uncleanness; a fountain whose streams will bless with life and beauty many generations yet to come.

TERRORS OF GUILT.

"What a state is guilt,
When everything alarms it! Like a sentinel
Who sleeps upon his watch, it wakes in dread
E'en at a breath of wind.
When apprehension can form naught but fears,
And we distrust security itself."—HAYARD.

FIRST STEP IN GUILT.

"Let no man trust the first false step
Of guilt; it hangs upon a precipice,
Whose steep descent in lost perdition ends."—YOUNG.

A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonising their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

SUBJECT: *Paul at Cæsarea before Felix.*

“And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders, and with a certain orator named Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul. And when he was called forth, Tertullus began to accuse him, saying,” &c.—Acts xxiv. 1—27.

PAUL is now at Cæsarea, a city situated on the coast of Palestine, on the great line from Tyre to Egypt. It is about half-way between Joppa and Dora, about thirty-five miles distant from Joppa, and fifty-five from Jerusalem, by the nearest route. Its distance, however, to the metropolis by the common road would be from sixty-five to seventy miles; hence it had taken the company of soldiers who had just conveyed Paul into the city, nearly two days to do so. In Strabo's time there stood on its site a town called Strabo's Tower. In the time of Tacitus, Cæsarea is spoken of as being the head of Judea. Herod the Great made the change. Twelve long years he was engaged at an immense cost of labour and wealth in building this city, in honour of the emperor Augustus. Josephus describes it as a city of “great magnificence.” Like all human productions, however, it has had its day, and has long since passed away. The few ruins that remain as monuments of its existence are tenanted by snakes, scorpions, lizards, and wild boars. It is associated with many interesting events in New Testament history. Here Philip, one of the seven deacons of the young Church,

lived for several years ; here Cornelius, the Italian centurion, was converted ; here the angel of the Lord smote Herod Agrippa the First, on account of his impious hardihood ; here Peter, when persecuted by Herod, found a temporary refuge ; from hence St. Paul sailed to Tarsus, when forced to leave Jerusalem on his return from Damascus ; here, too, he landed after his second missionary tour, and spent some time on his return from his third missionary journey ; and here now he is brought as a prisoner, and remains two long years before his voyage to Italy. It was the home of Eusebius, the father of ecclesiastical history ; was the scene of some of Origen's labours, and the birthplace of Procopius, the eminent Byzantine historian. In this chapter we have an account of Paul as he appears before Felix, and it leads us to consider his Accusers, his Defence, and his Judge. We take his judge last, because his character comes out more fully at the end of the chapter.

I. PAUL'S ACCUSERS. We have three things to notice concerning his accusers.

First: *Their character.* Who were they? "And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders." Ananias was the man who a few days before, in Jerusalem, as Paul stood before the Sanhedrim (Acts xxiii. 2), commanded Paul to be smitten on the mouth, thus outraging justice and humanity. The "elders" were members of that ruling body who sanctioned such an outrage. These had "descended" locally, and, proud bigots, as they considered, morally, to Jerusalem, in order, if possible, to carry into execution the mortal hostility of the Sanhedrim against Paul.

One might have thought that the known history of those hollow hypocrites, and unscrupulous and intolerant bigots, would have excluded them as witnesses from any court of justice—but here they are.

Secondly: *Their advocate.* "They brought with them a certain orator, Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul." As the name of this man is Roman, he was no doubt

a Roman barrister of signal abilities, and perhaps of great reputation. The Jews, probably, for the most part being ignorant of Roman customs and laws, employed Roman lawyers to represent them in the courts of justice. Whatever the ability, the culture, the fame of this Tertullus, one thing is clear from the adulation which he addressed to Felix, that he was an unscrupulous flatterer, and, therefore, destitute of that sense of truthfulness which is essential to all moral worth. Mark how he opens the case. "Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness, and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation by thy providence, we accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix, with all thankfulness." The character of this Felix, which will appear hereafter, will show this Tertullus to have been one of those unprincipled barristers who will outrage every noble sentiment of truth and justice in order to carry their point.

Thirdly : *Their charge*. The charge was threefold. (1) Sedition. "We have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews." A *pestilence*, or a pest, would be a more forcible translation, as well as a more literal one. The two great orators, Demosthenes and Cicero, speak of different persons as the pest of the Republic, the State, the Empire (*pestis republicæ, civitatis imperii*). All the disturbances and commotions which Paul's enemies created were laid to his charge. To the Roman no crime was more heinous than that of sedition, for they seemed nervously afraid that their vast empire might in some part give way. Another charge was (2) Heresy. "*A ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes*." The disciples of Christ were contemptuously called Nazarenes, because they were the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, a place of notorious contempt. Paul is charged here with being the leader of that sect of heresy. This charge has the merit of truth. He was a standard-bearer in this little but rapidly growing army. The other charge (3) was Sacrilege. "Who also hath gone about to profane the temple : whom we took, and would have judged according to our law." The profanation of the temple was a

serious but groundless charge. His enemies had asserted (chap. xxii. 28) that he had introduced Greeks to the sacred place; this was a foul calumny. After these charges, this clever but unprincipled advocate does two things. (1) Implies that the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem would have judged Paul righteously if Lysias had not interposed. "But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands, commanding his accusers to come unto thee: by examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him." (2) He gets the Jews, including Ananias, and the elders whom he brought down, to assent to all he had stated. "And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so." I suppose it would scarcely matter what the barrister said—what falsehoods he stated, what fallacies he propounded, if they went to ruin Paul, he would have the hearty corroboration of these Jews. Tertullus has now done; he has stated his charge, and done his best to make "the worse the better reason."

II. PAUL'S DEFENCE. This is Paul's *third* defence, or apology. The first was to a vast crowd of Jews assembled from all parts of the world at Jerusalem, to be present at the feast of Pentecost. The second was before the Sanhedrim, or great council of the nation. This, the third, is before a Roman magistrate, under the protection of Roman arms, yet in the presence of the high priest. There are four things about this defence that must be noticed.

First: *His introduction*. His exordium was *courteous* and *explanatory*. Then Paul, after the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered, "Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more cheerfully answer for myself: because that thou mayest understand, that there are but yet twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship." Whilst in his opening remarks there is nothing of the hollow laudation and servile flattery of the barrister, there is the courtesy of a truthful

and magnanimous soul. He gives the judge credit, not for great intelligence, commanding ability, great usefulness, or high virtue, but merely for a knowledge of Jewish affairs, and modern Jewish events. Here he expresses his pleasure in standing before one who knew the facts of the case. The apostle ventured to suppose that the judge knew that it was only "twelve days" since he went up to Jerusalem for to worship. The twelve days, says Lange, which the apostle mentions, may be reckoned as follows :—

I. Day after his arrival, visit to James. (Chap. xix. 18.)

II. Levitical purification, and the first visit to the temple. (Chap. xxi. 26.)

III.—VII. Days of the Nazarite-offering; onset against Paul, and his capture. (Chap. xxi. 27.)

VIII. The apostle before the chief councils. (Chap. xxii. 30; xxiii. 1.)

IX. The conspiracy, and its discovery; in the evening Paul is removed from Jerusalem. (Chap. xxiii. 12—31.)

X. Arrival at Antipatris. (Chap. xxiii. 31.)

XI. Arrival at Cæsarea. (Chap. xxiii. 32, 33.)

XII. At Cæsarea.

XIII. Trial before Felix. (Chap. xxiv. 1.) The trial before Felix accordingly took place on the fifth day (*μερὶ πέντε ἡμέρας*, chap. xxiv. 1) after Paul's departure from Jerusalem, if the day of the departure be included. On the other hand, the fifth day had not yet elapsed, and, therefore, is to be excluded from the twelve days, as also is the day of the apostle's arrival at Jerusalem. (Origen.) In his opening remarks he indicates two facts that bear powerfully on his own defence. (1) His recent arrival in the country (twelve days) leaving him no time for such proceedings as were charged against him; and (2) his purpose in visiting Jerusalem, which was to attend to the duties of that religion ("to worship") which they accused him of renouncing.

Secondly: *His denial*. He gives a direct denial to two of the three charges—sedition and sacrilege. "And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither

raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city: neither can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me." He disclaims, in the most unqualified way, any attempt on his part, whether in the city, temple, synagogues, or anywhere else among the people, to break the public peace, and boldly asserts the impossibility of sustaining any such charge by evidence.

Thirdly: *His confession.* The third charge, heresy, he accepts rather than repels. In answer to the charge that he was a "ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes," he says, "This I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets: and have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." The same Greek word as that translated "sect" in the fifth verse, is in this passage translated "*heresy*;" the word simply means, division, schism, without any reference to the present popular notion of heresy as being an error of doctrine. A new sect in theology is always heretical in the eyes of the old. The apostle is not ashamed of being a Nazarene, but he denies that Christianity is a newly-formed heresy. On the contrary, he affirms that as an apostle in the new faith, he held the old. (1) He worshipped the *old* God of the Hebrews. "So worship I the God of my fathers;" as if he had said, I propound no new divinity; the ancestral Deity I alone adore. (2) He believed in the Old Scriptures, believing "all things that are written in the law and in the prophets;" all things commanded by the law of Moses, and foretold by the old prophets, especially the things relating to the Messiah. His apostolic history was a proof of this, for wherever he went, his arguments in defence of Christianity were drawn from the Hebrew Scriptures. (3) He held to the *old hope*. "And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow." The Old Scripture undoubtedly points to the resurrection of the dead (Job xix. 25—27; Isa. xxix. 19; Dan. xii. 2), and the Pharisees, the leading

party of the nation, believed in it. Thus, he affirms that his religion was not an apostacy from the old, but the faithful following out of the old in the new light.

Fourthly : *His life*. He frankly declares the grand, moral obligation of his life. "*Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.*" This declaration is a part of his defence, not an expression of vanity. This verse treated homiletically may be looked upon as revealing three things.

(1) *The greatest power in man*—"CONSCIENCE." What is conscience? I regard it not so much as a faculty, or a law, or a function, of the soul, as its very essence, the moral self. That which connects us with moral government, constitutes our responsibility, and originates our weal or our woe. As is a man's conscience, so is he in the spiritual universe and before God. The New Testament attaches immense importance to conscience, no less than thirty times is it mentioned in its sacred pages. It was that in man to which the apostle appealed wherever he went. He sought to commend himself to "every man's conscience in the sight of God." The text reveals (2) *The divinest condition of man*. What is the divinest condition? To have a conscience *void of offence towards God and man*. "The exact word," says Dr. C. J. Vaughan, "*is unshaking, not striking against stumbling stones*. It is formed from that verb which we find in Psa. xci. (as quoted in our Lord's temptation) : *In their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.*" St. Paul desires to have a conscience, or self-privity, free from such impact; free from collision with stones or rocks impeding its course. The figure is most expressive. He does not speak here of preserving his life from stumbling, but his conscience; not, therefore, of the act, or the word, or the idea of evil, but rather of the effect of such things upon his self-cognizance, upon his inward view and review, upon his feeling and his consciousness as he looks within. He is determined, God helping him by the grace of his Holy Spirit, that his introspection, his perpetual judgment

upon himself, shall not find itself impeded and embarrassed in its course by stones and stumbling-blocks of evil done and good left undone; shall not trip here over a hasty or uncharitable word, and there over a neglected duty, and there over an injured soul, and there over a corrupt and polluting imagination; its course shall be clear as its judges; the straight and smooth and unstained surface of the life and soul shall present nothing for the self-cognizance to dash against as an upbraiding, accusing, or condemning object. This is the figure. The conscience, not the life only, must be kept void of offence. He would be able to say, "*I know nothing by (against) myself.*" The two chief departments of this *un-stumbling* conscience, correspond to the two great divisions of human duty—the one relating to God, and the other to man. "Void of offence toward God and toward man." The apostle does not say he has gained this blessed condition, but it was his *grand aim*. When a man's conscience gets into this state, he has reached the true blessedness of his being. A good conscience is heaven. The text reveals (3) *The chiefest work of man*. What is it? It is to get into this state. "Herein do I exercise myself." "Exercise, a verb originating and denoting any kind of hard work, then specially applied to athletic strife or training, and then to moral discipline. Especially to that of the severest kind, It here denotes not only constant and habitual practice, but methodical and systematic effort."—*Alexander*. The greatest work that a man has to do is with his moral self. Paul felt this; his outward battles were as nothing compared to those that he fought on the arena of his own soul. "So fight I as not beating the air."

Fifthly: *His explanation*. The apostle now reverts to the purpose of his journey to Jerusalem, and to the charge as having come as a mover of sedition, and he goes into explanation. It was more than *twenty years* since his conversion, and though he had paid occasional visits to Jerusalem, he had never resided there for any length of time. He informs the judge now, that his recent visit to the metropolis, after many

years, was a benevolent one. "Now, after many years I came to bring alms to my nation and offerings." The apostle had been the bearer of gifts from the churches of Macedonia and Achaia to the poor saints in the city. This was his mission, a mission of mercy and worship, not of rebellion and impiety. He assures the judge that he was found in the temple by certain Jews from Asia "*purified*," not gathering a multitude and creating a tumult, and that those Jews who found him there ought to have been present. "Whereupon, certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude, nor with tumult, who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had aught against me. Or else let these same *here* say, if they have found any evil-doing in me, while I stood before the Council, except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day."

Such was Paul in his defence before Felix. In this probably very abbreviated account which is given, does he not appear to great advantage?—dignified in bearing, frank in statement, skilful in argument, high in aim, and indomitable in his adhesion to his credenda. We have now to notice—

III. HIS JUDGE. Who was this Felix? We need not go to Josephus, or Tacitus, the latter of whom says that in "the practice of all kinds of lust, crime, and cruelty, he exercised the power of a king with the temper of a slave," for proofs of the wickedness of this man's life, sufficient for that comes out in the narrative. The narrative affords us a glance at him officially and morally.

First: *Officially*. How does he treat Paul, as a judge? He has heard the case, seen his accusers, listened to Tertullus, the advocate, looked at Paul, heard his noble defence, and if he possessed the most ordinary ability, penetration, and culture, he must have seen that the charges against the apostle were utterly groundless, and that the animus of his accusers was that of malignant and unscrupulous persecution. Hence,

as a judge, he should have acquitted him at once. Instead of which, how does he act? Though convinced, as he must have been, of the innocence and nobility of Paul, yet, in order to conciliate the Jews, he resorts to the cowardly expediency of delay. "And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, when Lysias, the chief captain, shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter." Legally, he could not condemn him; morally, he was too cowardly to acquit. He was, therefore, shut up to an adjournment of the case, and the pretext was, that Lysias, when he came down to Jerusalem, would give further information of the matter. It is only fair, however, to this corrupt judge, to say, that he granted to Paul during his imprisonment some privileges. "And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him." To be allowed to see his friends, though chained to a soldier, would, no doubt, be esteemed a great privilege by Paul. We may suppose that Philip and his family visited him—also Aristarchus, and Luke, the beloved physician, his companion, and biographer. The narrative leads us to look at him—

Secondly: *Morally*. "And after certain days when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee. He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him; wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. But after two years, Porcius Festus came into Felix's room, and Felix, willing to show the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound." In this we observe three facts touching this man's depravity. (1) *He is convicted, by Paul's preaching, of the enormity of his wickedness*. "Felix trembled." What made him tremble? It was Paul's discourse on the Christian religion—"faith in Christ,"

branching out into "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." No doubt Paul knew the man's history well—knew his connection with Drusilla, who sat by his side—knew well the most salient attributes as they came out in his conduct, and showed themselves in his looks and words, and, with all the force of his inspired genius, he brings the divine truth to bear upon his conscience, and the man trembles. The magistrate, the judge, the oppressor, the profligate, cowers with mysterious horror before the divine majesty of the prisoner's form and words. (2) *He trifles with his conscience by adjourning the question of reformation.* What does he do? Does he at once yield to truth—renounce the old, and adopt the new light which the awakened conscience dictates? No, but he stifles the feeling by promising to himself a more convenient season. "Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." This trifling with an awakened conscience added enormously to his wickedness. Better conscience never awake, than it should awake with its reproofs, and be disobeyed. (3) *Instead of setting to a reformation, he becomes increasingly corrupt.* He does send for Paul again, but what for? Not to help him out of his sins, but to gratify his greed. "He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him, wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him." He had learnt from Paul's defence that he had been entrusted with funds for the poor at Jerusalem. He knew, too, that Paul had thousands who believed in him, many of whom were wealthy men, and he expected that money would be forthcoming to purchase by a bribe his liberty. Of all the base passions in the human heart avarice is the basest, and this man had sunk deeply into that, after the convictions that he had received. Felix, to gratify his greed, and to please the Jews, let Paul remain for two years in his prison. Such, in Felix, was Paul's judge at Cæsarea.

From the whole chapter there are several grand subjects for thought which we can only briefly note.

First: *The malice of religious bigotry.* This comes out

in the fact that "five days" after Paul had left Jerusalem, the high priest, the elders, and Tertullus, their advocate, came down all the way to Cæsarea, in order to gratify their malign passions. (See ver. 1.) And for what? merely because Paul had outgrown their interpretations of the Scriptures. Religious hatred is of all hatreds the most insatiable and cruel. This may be explained.

Secondly : *The prostitution of distinguished talent.* Tertullus was evidently a man of noted ability, possessing great natural endowments, with high forensic culture and yet he gives himself to the advocacy of a cause the most iniquitous and inhuman. Like Judas he sold the truth for money. Tertullus is a representative man, a veritable type of all who sell themselves for gain.

Thirdly : *The Christianity of old Judaism.* Paul, though a Christian, regarded himself as a most consistent Jew. He believed (1) In the Jews' God ; (2) In the Jews' Scriptures ; (3) In the Jews' Resurrection. (See ver. 14, 15.) Christianity is Judaism brightened into noon.

Fourthly : *The characteristics of a great man.* (1) *He is not ashamed of an unpopular cause.* He had vowed his connexion with a "sect" universally despised. (See ver. 14.) (2.) *His highest aim is moral rectitude.* A good conscience is what he strives after. (Ver. 16.) (3) *He is not afraid to reprove iniquity in the great.* Paul lectured Felix on "unrighteousness, temperance, and judgment to come." (Ver. 25.) Such are ever the characteristics of a great man.

Fifthly : *The danger of religious delay.* The conscience of Felix was roused, under the ministry of Paul, and then was the "convenient" season-hour for his conversion. It was the favourable moral mood. He promised himself a "more convenient season," but it never came. Opportunities for seeing Paul came, and he availed himself of those opportunities again and again, but with none of those opportunities ever came the moral mood.

Germ of Thought.

SUBJECT : *The Rival Armies.*

"So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord : but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might."—Judges v. 31.

Analysis of Homily the Seven Hundred and Fifty-Sixth.

WHERE are different ways of reading history. We may peruse historical records, sacred or profane, as only relating to particular times and individuals. But that would be a very narrow view to take. We should rather read history as in some measure, at least, giving us an account of the Divine workings. The history of the Jews is especially interesting and instructive when viewed in its relation to the Providence of God. As in nature, so in grace, God is the greatest of economists. He is *liberal*, but never *lavish* of his gifts. There is a danger in these days lest we undervalue Old Testament writings, as though the spirit inspiring the New Testament were not equally the inspiration of the Old. The Bible is one. We may then take the incidents of Jewish national life, and derive some useful and salutary lessons by dwelling upon them in a right spirit. The text introduces us into one of the most interesting and instructive periods of the early national life in the promised land. *Israel had sinned. "And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord when Ehud was dead."* This was very ungrateful of the Jews, it must be admitted, but their conduct was not exceptional. The Jews were neither special in their virtues nor in their vices, but were simply samples of the human race. As a punishment for their sinfulness, "*the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles.*" Under these circumstances, the Israelites did just what might have been expected of them—they "*cried unto the Lord.*" And we find that the Lord did just what might have been expected of

Him—He delivered them by directing their course, and going up with their host to battle. (See chap. iv.)

The words of the text are the conclusion of a sort of pæan sung by Barak, the Jewish commander, and Deborah the prophetess. This Deborah is celebrated as the female judge of the Israelites when under that particular form of government. We are told that she "*dwelt under the palm-tree of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel, in Mount Ephraim, and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment.*" The traditionary place of her residence is still pointed out, and it is remarkable that a great meeting, or fair, is statedly held at it, as it has been since Deborah's time, at which, amongst other business, all disputes are settled, and quarrels adjusted between rival tribes.

Hebrew scholars refer to this fifth chapter of Judges as presenting some of the finest features of Oriental poetry; and even from our English translation we may feel its force and beauty. Dr. Halles says that "Its design seems to be twofold—religious and political; first, to thank God for the recent victory and deliverance of Israel from Canaanitish bondage and oppression; next, to celebrate the zeal with which some of the tribes volunteered their services against the common enemy, and to censure the lukewarmness and apathy of others who remained at home, and thus betrayed the public cause, and, by this contrast and exposure, to heal those fatal divisions among the tribes so injurious to the common cause." We take the text as setting forth a twofold division of those who come within the sphere of Christian influences—the rival armies of God and the powers of darkness; with the character and fate of the latter compared with the character and course of the former.

I. THE ENEMIES OF THE LORD. The division everywhere regarded in the Bible is a very simple one; it is moral, not circumstantial—good or evil, friend or foe. We have now to do with that large class who are the enemies of God. These do not all show their enmity in precisely the same

manner. Their spirit is one ; but their modes of operation vary. The great army may be divided into regiments. *We will mention some of them.*

First. *The character of the enemy.* 1. *The idolator.* This sin is as common now as in the days of early Jewish history. In form it differs. Idolatry is too often confounded with the worship of idols and images. This is a low form of idolatry, but not its essence. *Idolatry is the giving up the throne of our being to any king but God.* Mammon worship—the worship of men—pleasure—worship of the intellect as the measure of truth and the final appeal of judgment—the narrow and killing worship of self. 2. *The forgetful.* God had been wondrously kind to the Jews, but in the days of prosperity they forgot Him ; though when danger threatened, and the enemy approached, *they cried for deliverance.* Very Jewish, sometimes we say. No ! very human. 3. *The indifferent.* *As God adds to his mercies, we subtract from our thanks.* That which costs man little or nothing is frequently estimated as worthless. It was so with the Jews, as the chosen people ; it is much the same among us, than whom no people are more highly favoured in these latter days. God had a way of bringing the Jews to their senses, by threatening to *withdraw* his kindness. This is the Divine mode of procedure yet — *kind, though severe !* God is earnest, and He is not moved by trifles. 4. *The undecided.* This is not a hopeless condition, but it is nevertheless unsafe. It is an insult to God, for He has granted evidence sufficient. There is room enough to doubt it is true, but is equally true that there is light enough to show the way. There are some who hesitate to declare themselves on the side of God, because they tremble to incur the responsibility which such a declaration involves ; but God has made us responsible : we cannot be other if we would. They who remain undecided incur a heavier responsibility than such as profess faith in Christ. 5. *The reckless.* Those who defile, despise, and disgrace the unutterable goodness of the Lord.

Secondly : The doom of the enemies. *They perish.* (1.)

As without God and so cut off from the only source of true life. (2.) *As without God*, and so *without hope*. Without hope—the light of every man's pathway, the strength of every heart. Deprive *any man* of hope, and he is in hell. (3.) And not only so. But as fighting against God, thus being doomed to certain defeat. Who can set himself against the Divine order and be safe?

II. FRIENDS OF THE LORD. "*Let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.*"

The Bible does not profess to teach us astronomy. What is here said of the sun refers to what seems to be. You will bear in mind that the figure refers not to the period from sunrise to sunset, but from sunrise to the meridian of his splendour. It is a striking metaphor as setting forth the glorious ongoing and enlivening influence of the Christian character. (2.) *The course of the sun is very quiet.* God's greatest works are done almost in silence. There is far more real grandeur in the calm than the storm, as we shall see if we only think about it. The powers of darkness are in commotion—but not God, the power of light. And he who most quietly shines is, so far, likest God. (2.) *The course of the sun is gladdening.* Joy attends his path, and fertility is his shadow. No joy so intense, real, and perfect as that of the Christian. We are free to confess that some Christian people seem as little like the sun as night is like the day. If such are not misunderstood, they certainly are mistaken. Remember, however, the most of life is not on the surface. The deepest joy and the profoundest sorrow are both buried in the secret chambers of the heart. Geographers tell us that the ocean has an under-current unaffected by all the storms which lash the surface into fury. So of the Christian life *there is an under-current* which no outer storm can touch—a current calm as God, but not known except to Him, who is the secret of that hidden and profoundest calm. (3.) *The course of the sun is regular and sure.* He ascends by stately progress his appointed path. He is alike free from hurry

and beyond the need of rest. The man who loves God, being in the path of the Divine order, being in harmony with the Divine mind and will, is a man of progress—both steady and sure in the advances which he makes. (4.) *The course of the sun is one of increasing brightness.* From sunrise to mid-day the light grows more intense. Not only upwards, but brighter and brighter the higher he ascends. Glorious in his splendour ; life-giving in his influence. Clouded only that he may burst again upon the earth. And so the man who is on God's side, is *as the sun when he goeth forth in his might.* The Christian's condition is not one of safety merely, it is one of growth also. As he ascends from the region of night to the region of the day, he both has and manifests more of this light. "*They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength ; they shall mount up with wings as eagles ; they shall run and not be weary ; and they shall walk, and not faint.*"

H. G. PARRISH, B.A.

SUBJECT : *Life in Christ.*

"Sir, we would see Jesus," &c.—John xii. 20—26.

Analysis of Homily the Seven Hundred and Fifty-Seventh.

THE Greeks had heard of the wonder-worker in Judea. His name had reached their ear, or perhaps a word of his, like a seed, had dropped into their minds, or his fame, like a magnet, had attracted their hearts. His fame was by no means confined to Palestine ; the traveller had conveyed it into distant lands. Though men differed in their opinions concerning Him, all felt that He was the wonder of the age. The Greeks had heard enough to make them very desirous of seeing Him. "Sir, we would see Jesus."

I. THE GREEKS WERE REPRESENTATIVES OF MEN WHO CONSCIOUSLY OR UNCONSCIOUSLY FEEL AFTER GOD. They were

not Jews living in a foreign land, and speaking the Greek language, but Gentiles as distinguished from Jews. They were probably acquainted with the religion, philosophy, and faith of Heathendom ; they knew that no salvation, no satisfaction, no rest was to be found in them. Impelled by moral want, or by the Spirit of God, they left their homes in quest of light and repose. The restless action of the human mind is a significant fact bespeaking unconsciously its pristine state, and saying, "I am not what I was ; am not what I ought to be ; I am not what I wish to be." Sin returns upon the sinner, bearing its own frightful image in its punishment. He who refuses to rest in God is punished with restlessness ; he who hates the light is punished with darkness. How awful, yet how just the retribution !

The Greeks went up to Jerusalem to worship at the feast. No vain desire or idle curiosity led them thither. Between the Jew and the Gentile a strong line of demarcation was drawn ; outside that line men of faith—men who believed in a real communication from God to man—were found. The nations had their desire. Their literature abounds in reference to the Just Ruler, the Conqueror of Evil, and the Restorer of Paradise. The Temple had a court for the Gentiles. God's Word was translated into their language ; his light cannot be monopolised ; his lovely flowers are not confined to your gardens ; they are in the fields and hedges, on the bleak mountains, wild moors, and in the crevices of rocks. Melchisedec, Jethro, Job, Cornelius, were not Jews ; they were not flowers growing in the garden of Israel ; they were Gentiles ; they grew and blossomed, and fructified amidst the wilds of nature. These Greeks, like the treasurer of the Ethiopian queen, were moved by a devout desire—a Godward desire—one that may be often suspended and severely tried, and yet never extinguished—a desire stronger than any other—the dearest, noblest, and divinest feeling of the mind.

The Greeks sought and found Christ. It is not expressly stated that they saw Jesus, neither is it denied. The narrative, however, fully accords with the supposition that they

did ; the contrary would ill accord with the character of Him who said, "He that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out ;" "Seek and ye shall find." No man can seek Christ without finding Him. These earnest and devout men, doubtless, found Him, and what a treasure did they find ! The Messiah ! How great their joy ! Augustine, when under religious conviction, felt it hard to part with the joys of the world, but it was given him to taste of the joys of God, and anon he parted with all. Is not this the experience of every Christian ?

II. THE APOSTLES ANDREW AND PHILIP WERE REPRESENTATIVES OF CHRISTIAN MINISTERS WHO INTRODUCE MEN TO CHRIST. A minister of Christ is not a priest except in the sense that all Christians are. "Ye are a royal priesthood." This is affirmed not of the priesthood of Melchisedec, or Aaron, or Christ, but of the community of believers. A minister of Christ is not endowed with apostolic power to heal the sick, to forgive sin, or cast out devils ; he is called by God to preach the Gospel, to warn all men, to feed the flock of Christ, to be a faithful steward of the grace of God, to point all to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. The Spirit of God is ever guiding men to one person, and that person is Christ. Judaism was a finger-post set up in the centre of the nations, pointing them to the "Coming One." All religious institutes are directories of men to Christ. This, most assuredly, is the end of the Christian ministry. A minister of Christ has to do with souls in all conceivable states, in their sins, their woes, and their helplessness, when stricken with a sense of guilt, when combating with evil from within or without, when rejoicing in the path of duty and the favour of God, when passing from one world into another ; he is often in the chamber of sickness and death, hearing the word of victory or the wail of despair. In all places, to all men, his duty is one, his aim is one. Like Andrew and Philip, he guides men to Christ.

III. THE WORDS OF CHRIST TO THE GREEKS ARE THE

WORDS WHICH HE ADDRESSES TO ALL WHO COME TO HIM. He tells all (1), that death is the condition of a new life. Christ may at once have accompanied Andrew and Philip into the outer court where the Gentiles appeared, as the earnest of a great harvest, and the token of coming glory, and in the interview, said, "The hour is come that the Son of Man should be glorified." The crisis is at hand; the hour to which all the ages look, on which the eternity of the world is hinged—the hour of death, and yet the hour of glory. You see glory in nature, intellect, life; see the eternal glory in death—in the death of a corn of wheat. The importance of death corresponds with the value of life. All lives are valuable, but some more so than others. The life of a good king or a wise parent is more valuable than the life of a little child. Of all lives the life of Christ is the most important, and, therefore, his death the most momentous. His death is set forth as the act of his own will; by an act of love He put himself under the law of death. Many feel and keenly feel the mystery of the Christian atonement, but is it not a mystery in its own right, common with countless mysteries? Is not life a mystery, and death, and the resurrection? Is not the sun a mystery, and yet it is a mystery full of joy and power. As the eyes of men are opened to see God and themselves in God's light, sin is felt to be a crushing evil, causing unutterable agony—something more than reason, more than the voice of nature, more than words is felt to be necessary to re-assure us that God loves us—to calm us, and draw us to Him—some irreversible fact, some mighty deed, some tangible act, fraught with all that is holy and kind, for conscience refuses to trust even in a God that tampers with righteousness, or connives at sin, is felt to be necessary. Such act is the death of Christ. See Death with its halo of glory—Life emerging from death. Christ is the propitiation. God is the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus. (2) Self-abnegation is the condition of glory. You must die to live. "Verily, verily I say unto you except a corn of wheat die," &c. Laying aside the figure, he that loveth his life, shall lose

it, and he that hateth his life, shall save it. Do you wish to live in Christ, and with Him? There is but one way. The death of self is the pathway to life.

Walthamstow.

JOHN DAVIES.

SUBJECT: *Colossal Image ; or the Aggregation of Evil.*

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass. His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay."—Dan. ii. 31—33.

Analysis of Homily the Seven Hundred and Fifty-Eighth.

THIS is a part of Nebuchadnezzar's vision. The vision was *mental*. Man has other eyes than those in his body. The vision was *Divine*. Many of our mental visions are anything but Divine ; they are the creatures either of a diseased brain, or heart, or both. But God gave the Babylonian monarch this vision. The vision was *prophetic*. It pointed to future revolutions in the kingdom of men, and to the establishment of Christ's kingdom on the earth. The vision was *SYMBOLIC*. Generally in dreams the objects that appear to the mind's eye, are very grotesque, and of strange combinations as here, but they are not always, as here, symbolic, they have not always a meaning. We have shown, elsewhere,* that the image and the stone represent good and evil.

We have now to look at *evil* as represented by this colossal image, and we observe that—

I. IT IS A COMPOUND THING. The image was made up of various substances ; gold, silver, brass, iron, clay. Evil does not often appear here in its naked simplicity, it is mixed up with other things. Errors in combination with truths,

* See HOMILIST, second series, vol. iii. page 277.

selfishness with benevolence, superstition with religion, infidelity with science, injustice with law and evil, too, is in combination with customs, systems, institutions. It is a huge conglomeration. Unmixed naked evil could not, perhaps, exist. Worldly souls so compound it as to make evil seem good.

II. IT IS A BIG THING. This image was the biggest thing in the imagination of the monarch. Evil is the biggest thing in the world. Paul calls it *the world* itself, against which we are to battle, and the world which is to be conquered by faith. The image represents here what Paul meant by the "world," the mighty aggregation of evil. Alas, evil is the great image in the world's mind. When is it not? It stands on the great field of human life as a mountain darkening the moral sun, and keeping the whole race under its black, frigid, blighting shadows.

III. IT IS AN IMPERIAL THING. The various substances that composed the image, Daniel tells us, represent kingdoms—Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome. Evil here is imperial. The New Testament calls it "The kingdom of darkness." It wears the purple, occupies the throne, and wields the sceptre of nations. It is at the head of all earth's "principalities and powers." It sitteth as God even in the Temple.

IV. IT IS A HUMAN THING. The colossal image was a human figure—human head, breast, arms, legs, feet; and of human manufacture. Evil here is a *human* thing! All the errors of the world are the fabrications of the human brain; all the bad passions of the world are the lusts of the human heart; all the wrong institutions of the world are the productions of human power. Evil is human, it thinks with the human brain; it speaks with the human tongue; it works with the human hand. Man is at once its creator, organ, and victim.

V. IT IS A TOTTERING THING. On what does the figure stand? On marble, on iron, or brass? No, on clay; his

feet part of iron and part of clay. Evil, big, grand, and imperial though it be, lacks standing power; it is not firm-footed. It has clay feet, and must one day tumble to pieces. (1) Grand theories, if erroneous, have clay feet. (2) Great ecclesiastical systems, if wrong, have "clay feet." (3) Magnificent institutions, if unrighteous, have "clay feet." What though it has a golden head, a silver chest, and a brilliant and commanding aspect? its feet are only part of iron and part of clay.



Thinkings by a Broad-Bibleman.

(No. VI.)

SUBJECT: *The Know-nothings of Yesterday.*

THE *Saturday Review*, writing of Exeter Hall and the May meetings, has these remarks: "The difficulties raised by scientific growth, are obviously the main cause of many of the new theological developments in Europe. Now, in regard to these it is plain, to any one who observes what is going on around him, that the Evangelical party stands, as it were, on one side; it does not meet sceptics by denying the competency of reason, like one extreme set of thinkers, nor does it accept scientific opinions, and try to reconcile them with ancient doctrine, like the other extreme. It is confused and puzzled, and contents itself with simply denouncing all who differ from it."

There is, no doubt, a great deal of truth in all this. For, though it may be fairly doubted whether "scientific growth" be not in many cases scientific error, or perversion, there can be little question that the slow-going theologists of the present day slink away from controversy on these matters, and do not meet with a bold and manly front, these "oppositions of science." They are, in fact, "confused and puzzled." They seem afraid to encounter face to face, and on their own ground, men of such intellectual calibre; and, either from indolence or disinclination, arrange a disgraceful compromise, or allow judgment to go by default.

But there is far less to be feared than they seem to anticipate. "Great men are not always wise, neither do the aged understand judgment." Elihu was young, and his brother counsellors were old, yet in his controversy with Job, he had unquestionably the best of the argument; and experience has amply proved the truth of his statement, that the *dicta* of great men may be often doubted with impunity, if not with advantage.

We should not find it difficult to rebut very much that is foisted on us as "philosophy," and "scientific growth," if we would only go fairly into the subject for ourselves, though we are really often shut out from this course by the covert arguments of these sceptics themselves, and agree to close with them on a basis which enables us to evade the question, instead of grappling with it. "The Author of Nature, is the Author of Revelation; there *can* be nothing, therefore, in the world of physics really opposed to the testimony of inspiration." "God spake in times past by the prophets, but we are not told that He spake by the chroniclers or historians, so that the mere narratives and biographies of the Bible may or may not be true!"

Silly sophistries! disgraceful lullabies, these! and such as no honest Christian could accept, coupled as they often are, with direct and circumstantial details thoroughly at variance with the surface-meaning of God's Word. No, we must take these writers of the neological school fairly to pieces; first looking at their general reliability in matters of fact and inductive argument, and then examining, one by one, such of their individual statements as seem peculiarly to lie open to controversy or refutation.

And, first, let us look at Bunsen and his "Biblical Researches," as presented to us through Dr. Rowland Williams in the notorious "Essays and Reviews."

Something has been already said respecting his reliance on spurious and unintelligible traditions, as *modifying* the Bible; and it will, therefore, excite but little surprise to find him remarking, with "quaint strength," that "*there is no chronological element in Revelation!*" Truly, "the German refinement of method, *has* all the effect of confusion," if it can lead any man of common sense and common honesty to such a conclusion. The German mystics, who seem generally to "want time" for the development of their history of the human race, may revel in such choice "elements" of chrono-

logy as are to be found in Eratosthenes and Manetho. "To Hephæstus is assigned no time." "Helius reigned three myriads of years." "Mines lived *in the year* of the world 2900!" Precious elements these! Either Bunsen is a gigantic simpleton, or the whole world misunderstands him; joining with one voice in the wish of the editor of the *Athenæum*, "that some one would project his writings into the region of common sense!" But in the face of so notorious a mis-statement as this, is it not perfectly marvellous that he should find so many disciples. "No chronological element in Revelation?" Why, the Old Testament is essentially and pre-eminently chronological! A book of dates with a niche in history, for everything, and everything in its niche. How grateful would Bunsen have been if all the wisdom of Egypt could have supplied him with even so scanty, yet so substantial a chronology, as that furnished by a single verse of New Testament. "All the generations from Abraham to David, are fourteen generations; and from David to the carrying away into Babylon, are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ, are fourteen generations."

With what extreme accuracy and minuteness are the generations from Adam to the year of the Deluge recorded in Gen. v. 3—32. From the Flood to Abraham they are continued with the same care in Gen. xi. 10—26. "The sojourning of the children of Israel who dwelt in Egypt," beginning at this latter date, is declared to have been "four hundred and thirty years"; their wanderings in the wilderness occupied forty; and from the time of their entrance on the promised land, the sequence and succession of the Judges and Kings of that people are recorded with as much accuracy as those of our own sovereigns in England. And yet we have "no chronological element in Revelation!" according to Bunsen and his school. So far, therefore, from "accepting" his opinions, as some may recommend, we would rather have them noted, protested, and returned dishonoured.

To a similar school, perhaps, belong those other worshippers of a giant chronology, who are drawing their inferences respecting the "antiquity of man" and the "age of man" from geological and collateral discoveries in connection with his pristine handiworks. Our peat bogs and gravel-beds, our river-deltas and submerged forests, punctuated now and then by some rude Celtic or more finished Roman work of art,

form, according to their theory, the registers of human progress in ages so very remote that Adam would have blushed to think of them.

Their argument stands something like this:—Peat is decomposed vegetable matter, decaying in a certain ratio. Allow us to fix that ratio at our own sweet will, and we can tell you to a nicety exactly how long any particular bed has been in course of formation. If we find a work of art buried in it, it becomes a mere question of arithmetic *when* it was so buried; but if it do not lie deep enough for our purpose, you must allow us the alternative of supposing that its peculiar form prevented its subsidence, and, like Mohammed's coffin, it remained suspended half-way.

These premises allowed, the theorist will have very easy work; but we protest against such arguments *in limine*. Peat in a semi-fluid state, as it often is, naturally finds its own level, and if it flow into a hollow of any depth, will, in a few hours, become as thick as, in the ordinary course of things, it would do in as many years. Yet the inference of these theorists is, that anywhere and everywhere it grows only at the rate of one inch and a fifth in each hundred years.

Unfortunately, too, facts are against this theory in certain definite and well-determined instances. Let us, however, pity the poor facts, and set them aside. For Sir Charles Lyell, one of the great apostles of this system, thinks so little of them as to admit that the overthrow of a forest in the middle of the seventeenth century gave rise to a peat-moss in Lochbroom, Ross-shire, from which in less than fifty years afterwards the inhabitants dug peat; though, according to his own principles, the thickness ought not to have been greater than six-tenths of an inch.

So, with the growth of mud-banks, and the deltas of our rivers, no matter how powerful the current, or over what description of stratum it might flow. Put it down in round numbers at one foot in four hundred years, or one thirty-third of an inch every year, and you will be astonished to find how very old our race is!

To such reasoners thirty-thousand years are but as yesterday when it is passed. On data like these is based the stupendous antiquity of the human family—the theory of our successive ages of flint, of bronze, and of iron, as those may know who will consult Professor Kirk's handy volume, "The Age of Man, Geologically Considered in its Bearings

on the Truths of the Bible," a clever and exhaustive little work on the side of Revelation.

We are, indeed, to have our successive ages of fir, of oak, of alder, of beech, of hazel, and of birch, as if these trees could not grow lovingly together in the same soil, but must belong to different eras in the history of our earth's superficial strata! Sterne's Uncle Toby could find room in the same world for himself and the obnoxious blue-bottle. Why, then, should the beech bow out the oak, or the oak bow out the fir, before taking possession of its pre-historic territory?

Recent facts have thrown rather a disastrous light on this part of our subject. Edward Jackson, a drunken, dissolute fellow, who has lately figured in our police reports, it now seems is one of the godfathers of this "Age of Flint," if not its sole original sponsor! "Bones," "Shirtless," "Fossil Billy," or, as he was more widely called, "Flint Jack," has been furnishing most of the principal museums and collections in this country, and many parts of Europe, with works of art said to have been found in beds of drift belonging to the pre-historic and pre-Adamite periods, that were manufactured by his own fingers, and so well manufactured, too, as to deceive the best antiquaries of the day! Of Bishop Berkeley's theory, denying the existence of matter, Sydney Smith wrote rather smartly—"Bishop Berkeley destroyed the world—in one volume octavo." Greater far were Flint Jack, and his abettors; they gave its death-blow to the Bible by one flint arrow-head. We wish to take no unfair advantage of this fact, but such it is. It shows, at least, the *possibility* of raising on the basis of a practical joke—an archaeological hoax—a theory more tremendous in its consequences than even its own supporters could have imagined; for though the Bible does not fix the age of our earth, it certainly does limit, and mete out with extraordinary minuteness, the duration of man's occupation of it.

Nothing, at all events, that has been said or shown, is in the slightest degree calculated to shake this opinion, and we must, therefore, take our place contentedly where the Bible puts us—we *are* of yesterday, and know nothing after all.

"Of yesterday?" says Mr. Charles Darwin. "Oh dear, no!" Gradually, in process of development from a tadpole, through so long a series of ages, that three hundred and six millions, six hundred and sixty-two thousand, four hundred years, have not sufficed to forward the work a single stage, as you

may see in his *Curiosities of Natural History*, which, though some strange hallucination, he has misnomered "*The Origin of Species*!" Reverently would we add to the litany of our study and our closet—"From the large faith of infidels, and the credulity of sceptics, good Lord, deliver us!"

If all readers of the Bible would take their stand upon the text, "Let God be true, and every man a liar," we should have no more timid commentators. William Hone spoke like a man, when, on his trial before Lord Ellenborough, he exclaimed, with reference to one of the dicta of his judge, amidst the tumultuous applause of a crowded court—"After all, it is but the opinion of one man; it is *but* his lordship's opinion." We believe that so many of the arguments put forth against revelation, may be brought to this issue, that we are very little troubled by them.

Astronomy, geology, archæology, have each their bubbles. From time to time we see them come to the surface of public opinion, dilate to bursting, and then collapse, and disappear. The wisdom of the present becomes the folly of the future, and the facts of yesterday melt into thin air to-day. The earth stands still, and the sun moves round it, till they change places and conditions, and the sun stands still. In steps Maëdler, and again sets him moving, but this time it is around a central and more important luminary. But a short time since he was a globe of fire; then he was a black opaque mass—a dark lantern turned inside out. To-day he is swaddled in a gorgeous "photosphere," through a hole or two in which we can see something of his naked ugliness. Less than a century ago the moon had seas innumerable, and an atmosphere just like our own; to-day she is robbed of both. Our comets have been classed and yoked, and tracked through the heavens, but they still refuse to go in harness, and are always turning up at the wrong time, or in the wrong places. Only one thing is sure—that "the heavens and the earth," kept in store by the word of Jehovah of Hosts, perform all their allotted functions with such unerring exactitude, that proud man derives from them his only correct ideas of time and order, and by way of reprisal, plumes himself on his skill in predicting the phases, transits, occultations, and eclipses of the celestial bodies, in utter regardlessness that God has not only furnished all the elements of the calculation, but the very ability to work out the problems involved.

So again with Geology and Palæontology. What are these

footprints not unlike the impression of a broad, fleshy, human hand? They are those of a strange animal, which we may call, provisionally and with much safety, a *chirotherium*, "the large wild beast with hands." Pressed more closely, we will style him a *marsupial*, allied to the opossum tribe, as he seems to have had very large hinder extremities and smaller fore ones. As time progresses, however, or "scientific growth" goes on, he is silently transformed into a *batrachian*, a gigantic toad, now known as the *labyrinthodon*! Here, again, is a long, light, slender bone, belonging, according to the very greatest of our fossil-anatomists, to a long-winged bird allied to the albatross. But, no; the birds are only found in strata widely removed from that in which it was discovered. Let us make him, therefore, a flying-dragon—a *pterodactyle*—a gigantic bat! And "scientific growth" writes "*stet!*" to this latest reading, till a later comes to score *dele* in the margin. Here again is a tooth, from which we are to deduce the nature of the animal to which it once belonged. It is referred to the "age of lizards," and is said exactly to resemble, though on a much larger scale, that of the recent iguana of the West Indies. There can be no doubt, therefore, says Dr. Mantell, that it is a tooth of his older and bigger brother, to whom, from this circumstance, he has given the name of *iguanodon*. And Dr. Buckland follows, most unequivocally, on the same side. But "scientific growth" comes to a halt again, for Professor Owen, a greater authority than either, says that no two teeth can possibly be less alike, though the world has kindly consented to let the blunder pass. And the horn upon its nose, so beneficently bestowed to enable the creature to rip up its food, is not a little apocryphal. We ought not perhaps to tell tales out of school, but we happen to know that in the restoration of this monster at the Crystal Palace, this appendage was added, less from thorough conviction on the subject than from concession to the popular idea. "The public will expect a horn," was the *naïve* climax of the discussion on that subject, and "scientific growth" was complaisant enough not to disappoint the masses.

How little our archæologists and antiquaries are to be relied on we have already shown at length. The Bible is a thing *per se*—perfect and invulnerable; and we fear for it, much more from its injudicious friends than from its open enemies—from those who are disposed to compromise, than from

those who are determined to assail it. Let it stand on its own merits, and it will stand safely, but there must be no under-pinning its foundations with human theories. "Scientific growth" may be good enough in its way, though there is always the fear that it may be spurious, abnormal, or unhealthy. The Bible does not grow, but we shall never exhaust the light and truth that, as some good old Puritan fathers told us, are still to break forth from it. "For ever, O Lord! thy word is settled in heaven!" For nearly half a century this conviction has been ours, and still our early faith in the good old fable of the "Dog and his Shadow" is so practically rooted in us, that we are not likely to run away from it for the highest and most conclusive "confirmations" that man can offer.

STET.

Biblical Criticism.

By Rev. CHARLES WILLS, M.A.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.—EMENDATIVE RENDERINGS.

Chapter xxiv. 1.—And after five days the High Priest Ananias *went down*, with the elders and a certain orator, Tertullus, who informed the governor against Paul. 2. And he *having been* called, Tertullus began to accuse [him] saying, *Obtaining much peace* by thee, and *good regulations coming* to this nation by thy *foresight*, 3. Both always and in all places we *acknowledge*, most *excellent* Felix, with all thankfulness. 4. But that I no *more delay* thee, I beseech thee to hear us *concisely in thy kindness*. 5. That is, having found this man [*αυδα*] a *pest*, and *moving discord* among all the Jews *that are* throughout the world [*οικουμενην*], and *foremost* of the sect of the Nazarenes: 6—8. Who also *attempted* to profane the temple [*το ιερον*], whom *also* we *seized*:* *from* whom *thou wilt* thyself *be able*, by *fully* examining, to *come*

* Here Lachmann and Tischendorf leave out the remainder of the *verbo*, the whole of the seventh, and part of the eighth. With them agrees Codex Aleph.

to the knowledge of all these things of which we [emphatic] accuse him. 9. And the Jews also set on together, saying these things so to be. 10. And Paul answered, when the governor had beckoned to him to speak, *Understanding thee to have been for many years judge to this nation, I cheerfully give account of my concerns.* 11. *Thou being able to come to the knowledge that there are not more than twelve days since I went up, about to worship, into Jerusalem.* 12. And neither in the temple [ῥῶ ἱερῶ] found they me disputing with any man, nor making an uprising of the crowd, neither in the synagogues, nor through the city. 13. Nor can they prove to thee the things of which they now accuse me. 14. But I confess this to thee, that after the way which they call sect, thus I worship the God of the fathers, believing all things according to the Law and the Prophets written, 15. Having hope towards God, which even these themselves take to them, that a resurrection is to be both of righteous and unrighteous. 16. And in this I myself am striving, to have an inoffensive conscience towards God and men always. 17. And many years having past, I came about to bring alms to my nation and offerings. 18. Thus there found me cleansed in the temple [ῥῶ ἱερῶ], neither with crowd nor with uproar, certain of Asia, Jews, 19. Who ought to be present before thee, and accuse, if they had anything against me. 20. Or let these same say, what unrighteousness they found in me, when I stood before the Council, 21. More than concerns this one word, which I cried standing among them, Concerning resurrection of the dead I [emphatic] am judged to-day by you. 22. And when Felix heard these things, he put them over, knowing somewhat accurately concerning the way, saying, When Lysias the præfect comes down, I will thoroughly know your affair; 23. Having ordered the centurion that he be guarded, and have liberty, and to hinder no one of his [friends] to minister to him. 24. And after some days, Felix coming with Drusilla his wife, who was a Jewess, sent for Paul, and heard him concerning the faith in Christ Jesus. 25. And he disputing concerning righteousness and self-con-

trol, and the judgment that is to be, Felix, become exceeding fearful, answered, As it now stands, go, and I will take an opportunity, and call for thee; 26. At the same time also hoping that money would be given him by Paul; wherefore also sending oftener for him, he conversed with him. 27. But the space of two years being fulfilled, Felix received a successor, Porcius Festus; and Felix willing to gain favour with the Jews left Paul behind bound.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

THE EFFECTIVE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY—A GROWTH.

"For as the earth bringeth forth her bud, and as the garden causeth the things that are sown in it to spring forth; so the Lord God will cause righteousness and praise to spring forth before all the nations."—Isa. lxi. 11.

THE figure in the text concerning the extension of Christianity in the world occurs in other places of this book. (Chap. xlv. 8, lv. 10, 11.) I shall take these words to illustrate the *true* spread of the Gospel, and I infer—

I. IT IS A NATURAL GROWTH. The *effective* extension of Christianity is not a mere extension of its *knowledge*, nor a mere extension of its *institutions*. It is a *growth in the soul*. "As the earth bringeth forth her bud," &c. Growth implies that it is a living thing in the soul. Not a theory in the intellect, not

a feature in our manners, but a germinant seed. Three things mark growth. First: *Gradualness*. The seed sown in the earth does not spring forth and reach maturation at once. Time is required. So with Christianity. Secondly: *Variety*. Each seed takes its own shape and hue. So Christianity comes out into different forms in the light. Honesty, devotion, love, courage, &c. All grow out of the seed. Thirdly: *Beauty*. How beautiful the earth and the garden when covered with the stalks and buds and blades and blossoms that have sprung forth from the seed that have been deposited in the soil! Christianity grows in the soul and *beautifies* the character.

II. IT IS A VALUABLE GROWTH. What comes up? "Righteousness and praise."

First: It produces *true morality*—"righteousness." It induces man to do to his neighbour what he would have his neighbour do to him. Were all men to act rightly towards each other, what a blessed world this would be! Secondly: It produces *true religion*—"praise." It not only leads man to do his duty towards his fellow, but his duty towards his Maker—fills him with gratitude, adoration, worship. "Truth shall spring from the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.

III. IT IS A UNIVERSAL GROWTH. It will "spring forth before all nations." Christianity is not a seed that can only grow in certain soils and climates. It can grow everywhere—grow in every soul, on every zone. In the Hindoo, in the Hottentot, the Esquimaux, the Chinese, as well as in the Celt and in the Saxon. It shall cover the earth. "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth bud, that it may give seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my Word be that goeth out of my mouth," &c. And again, "Instead of the thorn there shall come a fir-tree."

IV. IT IS A DIVINE GROWTH.

"So the Lord God will cause," &c. God is the great husbandman. (1) He prepares the soil. (2) He deposits the seed. (3) He imparts the quickening influence. The sunbeam, the shower, and the salubrious air he brings to bear upon the implanted seed.

CONCLUSION.—This subject First: *corrects an error in Christian propagandism*. Most missionary societies measure the progress of the Gospel by the diffusion of its ideas and institutions, whereas it only extends as it really *grows in the souls* of individual men:—as it brings out righteousness and praise, true morality, and true religion in the life of men. Secondly: *Indicates the true method of teaching the Gospel*. How is Christianity to be so imparted as to take root in the soul? Not by giving the theological husks of the seed, or our opinions of the seed, or a chemical analysis of the seed, but by giving the seed itself in its entirety. Thirdly: *Affords a touchstone to the character*. What is our Christianity? A floating idea, an outward observance, an occasional service? If so, it is worthless. Unless it is a living, growing thing within us, we are vitally and practically without it.

HEAVEN'S APPEAL TO THE SINNER.

"Thus saith the Lord, What iniquity have your fathers found in me, that they are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity, and are become vain?"—Jer. ii. 5.

THIS is God's appeal to the sinful men of Judah, and in this appeal—

I. THE SINNER IS DIVINELY DESCRIBED. "They are gone far from me, and have walked after vanity." First: *Sin is departure from God.* A departure not from his presence; this is impossible. "Whither shall I flee from thy presence?" (Psalm cxxxix.) It is an alienation of sympathy and soul. Sin is an apostasy from God. Secondly: *Sin is a progress of vanity.* "They have walked after vanity." The Jews had become idolatrous—gone after other gods; and idolatry is vanity. "An idol," says Paul, "is nothing in the world." (1 Cor. viii. 4.) Everything about a sinner's life is vain. (1) The pleasures that he seeks are unsatisfactory. (2) The honours he aspires to are unreal. Wealth, influence, position, fame, these are all empty; they are outside of him; they don't enrich and ennoble the soul. Sin is a going from the real into the unreal—from God into vanities. In this appeal, II. THE SINNER IS DIVINELY CHALLENGED." "What

iniquity have your fathers found in me?" Have I done anything to justify your apostasy and rebellion? This appeal implies, First: *That if iniquity were discovered in Him, there would be some justification for apostasy on the sinner's part.* Were He unloving, false, malignant, and tyrannic, the sinner would have reason to flee from Him as from an infinite fiend. The appeal implies, Secondly: *That the discovery of such iniquity is an absolute impossibility.* There are three revelations of God, and each gives Him to us as a being of absolute perfection. (1) *Nature.* Look at Him as He is reflected in this wonderful universe, and can you discover anything but perfection? (2) *Biography of Christ.* The biography of Christ is my Bible, and is there any manifestation of God in that biography that is not perfect? Perfect grace, perfect truth. (3) *The moral soul.* Our souls are God's revelations, and do they not declare that God is perfect? Does not the fact that all men feel bound to love Him, indicate an innate belief in his perfection? No being in the universe can find iniquity in God. Could hell find it, its agony would be mitigated if not removed.

GENUINE PHILANTHROPY.

"Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of way-faring men, that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men."—Jer. ix. 1, 2.

JEREMIAH, son of Hilkiah, one of the ordinary priests, dwelling in Anathoth, exercised a lengthened prophetic ministry. For eighteen years he prophesied under the reign of Josiah, for three months under Jehohaz, for eleven years under Jehoiakim, for three months under Jeconiah, and for eleven years under Zedekiah. He lived in stirring and solemn times, times when his countrymen revelled in crimes that brought on them terrible judgments, ending in Babylonian thralldom. He was a devout saint, a true patriot, a faithful prophet, and, in many respects, a model philanthropist. So exalted was the idea that the early church entertained of him, that they pictured him as the very type of Him who was the most perfect incarnation of heaven's tenderness and love. There are many in this age who set themselves up as philanthropists, who have no genuine philanthropy in them. Conventional philanthropists,

men who drive a lucrative trade under the name, are numerous in England, and I fear increasing. They impose on the credulous, they are an offence to genuine souls, and their lives are a calumny on the holy cause. The text presents us genuine philanthropy in two aspects.

I. MELTING WITH EARNESTNESS. "O, that my head were waters." He had wept copiously, but he would weep more. Weep rivers if he could thereby serve his countrymen and honour God. First: His heart was intensely earnest concerning the *temporal condition* of men. The Chaldean army is amongst them. The sword staining the country with blood, filling the air with the groans of the dying and the wails of the bereaved, is at its hellish work. "The slain of the daughter of my people." This distresses him; He weeps as a patriot over the grief of his country. Jeremiah felt now, no doubt, in some measure, what He felt, who, when he beheld the city, wept over it, and exclaimed, "O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem," &c. Secondly: His heart was intensely earnest concerning the *moral condition* of men. Their carnalities, idolatries, crimes, and wickednesses would affect his pious spirit more than their

physical sufferings and political disasters. He knew that sin was the cause of all the disasters, and that there was no salvation without the removal of sin. He is no true philanthropist who is not *chiefly* concerned with the souls of men. "My heart's desire," says Paul, "and prayer to God for Israel, is that they may be saved." How deeply David felt for the spiritual condition of the men of his age. "Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law." (Psa. cxix. 136.) And again, "My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God." (Psa. xlii. 3.) Why all this earnestness about the soul? The condition even of one soul demands a thousand times more earnestness. (1) Think of one *soul* in relation to its capability of suffering and happiness. (2) Think of one soul in relation to the influence for good or evil it is capable of exerting upon the universe. (3) Think of one soul in relation to its power of being a delight or a grief to the heart of Infinite Love. The text presents to us—

II. GENUINE PHILANTHROPY SIGHING FOR ISOLATION. "O that I had in this wilderness a lodging-place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people, and go from

them, for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men." First: This sigh for isolation is the sigh of a *spiritually vexed soul*. Like Lot, in Sodom, the hideous forms of sin which appeared to him every day, "vexed his righteous soul." Like David, when he saw the way of the transgressors, he "was grieved." Like Paul at Athens, his soul was "stirred" into agony within him, at the revolting iniquities that met him at every turn. Natures, spiritually refined and ennobled, often recoil with an inexpressible disgust from the vanities and the crimes of their age. With Cowper, they exclaim—

"O for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless contiguity of shade,
Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war,
Might never reach me more! My ear is pain'd,
My soul is sick with every day's report
Of wrong and outrage with which earth is fill'd."

Secondly: This sigh for isolation is the sigh of *disappointed love*. He had worked hard earnestly and with self-denial to improve the spiritual condition of his countrymen, and yet they seemed to grow worse and worse, to sink deeper into iniquities. Nothing is more

saddening to generous souls than the discovery of indifference, ingratitude, and growing vice in the very men they seek to bless. Elijah felt it, and he betook himself to the cave. David felt it, and exclaimed, "O had I the wings of a dove, then would I flee away, and be at rest." Christ felt it, and said, "I have laboured in vain." There is danger of a corrupt age, exhausting the love of genuine philanthropists. There are instances of loving souls becoming misanthropic through the ill-treatment of those whom they endeavoured to serve. It is a sublime fact that Christ's philanthropy survived the fiendish cruelties of the cross, rose with Him from the sepulchre, and despatched a messenger of mercy to his most malignant enemies in Jerusalem.

CONCLUSION. (1) The *vicariousness* of genuine philanthropy. It inspires its possessor with the spirit that will prompt him to sacrifice his very being for the good of others, to weep himself away. "I would that I were accursed for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." All genuine philanthropy bears the sin and sorrow of others. (2) The *abuse* of genuine philanthropy. How shamefully was the love of Jeremiah requited by his countrymen!

The greatest sin in the universe is sin against love. (3) The *imperfection* of genuine philanthropy. Like the best of everything human, love is not perfect here. In Jeremiah's case it seemed to give way. Disheartened, he sought isolation from his people. At one time we hear him exclaim: "I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name."*

THE GOOD FIGHT.

"Fight the good fight of faith."
—1 Tim. vi. 12.

THE various phases of the Christian life are set forth in the sacred writings by similes. People fight either the fight of faith or of passion. He who knows that he is wrong and yet madly and persistently goes on, is doing the latter; he who believes he is right (whether he is or not), and because of his belief pursues his object, prosecutes his task, is in the former case. To fight the good fight a man must resist everything that is opposed to Christianity without, and also everything within himself that would, unchecked, hinder him from attaining and retaining the several graces. The text by no means teaches persecu-

* See HOMILIST, vol. iv., second series, p. 138.

tion. We are to *win* souls. Persecution never did that. Nor does it inculcate bribery. Kindness is a Christian duty, bribery is the devil's plan. We may oppose sin by an earnest life; or, it may be, at times most effectually by patient endurance. The fight—

I. IT IS SEVERE. Our enemies are many, strong, united. However different in form and operation, they seek the same object, viz.: to draw us from duty, to produce indifference and obtuseness. We feel that they are strong, or, rather, that we are feeble.

II. IT IS PAINFUL. It is the house divided against itself. One desire in antagonism to another. Sometimes, too, we have to sacrifice the favour of those we love, and who, but for this, would love us.

III. IT IS CONSTANT. Foes never tire, we must never rest. Dangers exist up to the very gates of heaven, and the struggle is co-existent with this life. This cannot be doubted. See the many who fail after years of honourable

resistance. This need not discourage us, for the period of rest will be more than proportionate. Moreover, its severity and painfulness viewed aright, are matters for thankfulness. "According to that he hath done." Again, in this fight success is certain to those who comply with the Commander's orders. Lastly, remember it is a GOOD FIGHT. That is, you are on the side of right and truth. All the consequences of your success will be good to you and to the world now and for all time. The objects and aims of most, if not of all wars, have been positively evil. This is unmixed good. In America of late right and wrong met. It was, in the result, a good fight. But attendant upon the floating banner and the sounding drum was the widow's wail and the orphan's cry. Not so here. The wealthy are made wise, the poor thrifty. Peace dwells in the soul, and health blooms upon the cheek. Friends, I know you are fighting, but is it the good fight?

RICHARD GRAY.

GUILT, THE SOURCE OF SORROW.

"Guilt is the source of sorrow, 'tis the fiend—
Th' avenging fiend—that follows us behind
With whips and stings."—ROWE.

Scripture and Science.

(No. IV.)

SUBJECT: *The Sun.*

A.—The physical nature of the sun, and its chemical and dynamical influence.

THE sun is the most conspicuous object in nature. It is seen by all men. It makes the world joyous and cheerful, and its absence for some hours in every twenty-four in most latitudes, and for some weeks in every year in other places, only serves to impress its value on the minds of men. The dependence of light and life upon the sun led many of the ancients to regard it as divine, while others identified it with the Deity.

In our study of the sun, we are struck with (1) its *immense distance from us*. Aristarchus of Samos believed it to be nineteen times as far from us as the moon. Ptolemy supposed this to be correct, and assumed the solar parallax to be three minutes, a value accepted by all succeeding astronomers, including Tycho Brahé. Kepler, however, by laborious calculations reduced the parallax to one minute, or even less. Cassini fixed it at nine and a-half seconds. Careful observations at the transits of Venus, and calculations from the parallax of Mars, give results which somewhat differ from each other, making the solar parallax from nine and a quarter down to eight and a quarter seconds. Taking 8.6" as a mean value, the sun's distance from us was found to be ninety-five millions of miles, a distance of which we cannot form the remotest conception. Later discoveries, however, in connection with the velocity of light, render it certain that the real distance is nearer 91,512,649 miles than ninety-five millions.

We are also struck with (2) *the sun's overwhelming greatness*. Its apparent diameter being in December, 32' 35.6", and in July, 31' 31", we may assume 32' as the mean apparent diameter, which gives for the real diameter about 880,000 miles. Our central orb is thus so vast that, if all the planets from Mercury, which receives the full stream of light and heat, to Neptune, far away upon the confines of creation, were made into one great globe, six hundred of such globes would be required to equal in bulk the sun; and though its density be but little more than that of water (water being 1, sun, 1½), such is its weight, that 738 globes, each equal in weight to that of all the planets put together, would not be equal to that of the sun alone.

In our study of the sun we are also struck with (3) *the mystery of its physical nature*. Sages have, for centuries, speculated concerning the nature of the sun, but so little progress was made for centuries, that the followers of Aristotle clung to the opinions of their master

respecting its purity and freedom from all physical changes. Fabricius, Scheiner, and Galileo, in 1611, asserted, however, the existence of dark spots upon the surface of the sun itself. Our knowledge of the physical nature of the sun is principally derived from the study of these spots in conjunction with Spectrum Analysis. The deepest parts of these spots, sometimes 2,600 miles from the surface (*Secchi*), are jet black, showing that the body of the sun is opaque and non-luminous. The border of the sun's disk is much less luminous than the central parts, showing that the highest strata in the solar atmosphere are also dark; while the fact that the bright lines which are found in the spectra of fused matter, or the same in a state of combustion, are dark in all spectra of the sun, shows that the light of luminous elements passes through the same in a gaseous form. The luminous envelope of the sun is, therefore, at a lower temperature than the non-luminous on its external surface, and the chemical elements which enter into the composition of the sun, are similar to those which constitute the earth and planets, and differ but little from those which form the fixed stars, as far as these have been examined.

The most wonderful feature in connection with this subject probably is (4) *the wonderful mechanical power which the sun is daily exercising upon the surface of the earth.* I do not, here, refer to the power of its attraction, as that acts upon each atom of which the earth is composed, its direction being the line which joins the centres of gravity of the two bodies, and its force being in proportion to the masses, and inversely in proportion to the square of the distance which exists between them.

I refer here to a power which has been discovered, proved, and in some measure calculated in our day.

Consider, first, the fall of rain and the formation of dew. It has been discovered by Mayer and Joule, by a series of experiments conducted with infinite care, that the heat which raises the temperature of water one degree, would, if otherwise applied, raise one pound weight 772 feet. So that, taking the mean temperature of water at 50 degrees *Fahr.*, the power which would convert one pound of water into steam, or vapour, would, if otherwise applied, raise one pound weight to a height of nearly twenty-four miles. Remembering this fact, and, at the same time, that all the rivers and streams of the earth, containing millions of tons of water, have been evaporated by the sun's heat from the surfaces of seas and lakes and lands, the mechanical power of that heat seems at once beyond all human conception. Nor is this all: for the sun lifts up the sap of all vegetation, and causes the deposition of carbon by the decomposition of the carbonic acid of the atmosphere, and thus literally builds our corn-stalks and forest trees.

There are many other points of interest in connection with the physical nature of the sun, but these are too important to be omitted. Let us now proceed to

B.—The application of these facts to the illustration of Scripture texts.

It is not necessary to suppose that the sacred writers were acquainted with all the various scientific facts to which reference has been made; it is certain that they were not. What they knew of the sun rendered it, in their opinion, a suitable illustration of spiritual conceptions; and it is pleasing for those whose lines are cast in this more enlightened period to observe that, the most recent revelations of science render the supreme luminary only more forcibly illustrative of spiritual truth.

As a rule the sacred writers represent the sun as a blessing, but owing to its withering heat in Palestine and the adjacent countries, at noonday, it is spoken of occasionally as an evil, as in Psa. cxxi. 6: "The sun shall not smite thee by day." (See also Rev. vii. 16.)

Firstly: The sun is used as an illustration of some *positive good*, so that its absence or withdrawal is regarded as a great calamity. So Isa. xiii. 10, "*The sun shall be darkened in his going forth.*" Here (1) the glory of the Babylonian empire is regarded as the glory of the sun. (2) The destruction of that empire is to be complete, as the changing of the sun into darkness, or its annihilation. And (3) this complete destruction is to be most unexpected, as the disappearance of the sun in the morning, "in his going forth."

Secondly: The sun is used as an emblem of *perpetuity*, as in Psa. lxxv. 17: "*His name shall be continued as long as the sun.*" The Psalmist refers here to (1) the nature of the kingdom of Messiah by the word "name," and to (2) its continuance by the word "sun." Men live and die; empires rise and fall; but the sun continues. The same sun which shone upon primeval chaos, quickened into life and coloured into beauty the flowery scenes of Paradise. The same sun gives light to sire and son, shines on the infant's cradle, and years later, on his grave. The sun endures through all time and all changes: so shall continue the kingdom of Messiah.

Thirdly: The sun is used to denote, generally, *God's relation to the universe*, in Mal. iv. 2, "*But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall.*" The prophet teaches (1) that God is, in Himself, like the sun, the same to all, "sun of righteousness." The phrase "sun of righteousness" is a Hebraism for "righteous sun," the reference being to God as a righteous being, though He punishes wicked men as stated in the verse before. To all men, good and bad, God acts righteously—acts according to the same principles, as the sun shines on all alike. The prophet states further (2) that God, like the sun, varies in his influence upon different objects. To some He rises "with healing in his wings," the word wings, referring to the swiftness of the sun in its early appearance. The text denotes

(3) that God's influence, like that of the sun, varies according to fixed and unalterable conditions. The sun heals the living plant and wakes up the beauty of the sleeping flower, but withers up the dead. As the sun burns up the stubble, the Lord destroys the wicked; but as the sun feeds the forest from an element in the moving air (CO_2), so the Lord heals the wounded souls of all who feel their sickness; He gives his blessing to those "who fear his name." Observe again (4) that God's influence, like that of the sun, produces the happiest results wherever the right conditions are fulfilled, "and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall"—like animals fattened.

Fourthly: The sun is used specially to illustrate *God's relation to his people*, as in Psa. lxxxiv. 11. "*The Lord God is a sun.*" As the sun is to the earth, so is God to all believers. Note (1) that as the sun is great in comparison with the earth, so is God great in all his relations. (2) As the sun is, to a great extent, mysterious in its nature, so is God incomprehensible. (3) As the sun is everything to the earth, preventing it from flying into space, by its attraction, and originating all its mechanical and chemical powers, as well as sustaining its million forms of vitality, so is God everything to those who trust in Him.

No figure could have represented the Lord of all more graphically or correctly than the sun; we are therefore not surprised to find it so often used thus by the sacred writers. Yet we find that these writers felt that in many points the illustration was defective; for we find one speaking of heaven as a place where "they need no sun, for the Lord God giveth them light." (Rev. xxii. 5.)

Preston.

EVAN LEWIS, B.A., F.R.G.S., F.E.S.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CVI.)

NEMESIS: DESTINY FOLLOWING CHARACTER.

"Evil pursueth sinners: but to the righteous good shall be repaid."—Prov. xiii. 21.

THAT retributory justice tracks our footsteps, is a doctrine as old as the race. It grows out of the conscience, and is confirmed by the experience of mankind. The Nemesis of the heathen, which

was a mysterious pursuer of character, was only a personification of the doctrine. The subject of the text is, *Destiny follows character*. Misery grows out of sin, and happiness out of goodness.

I. THE LAW OF MORAL CAUSATION SHOWS THIS. Man's character is not the creation of a day or an hour, it is the result of past actions. When no change has

taken place, like that of regeneration, the man's character to-day is the result of the whole of his past life, and will be, without such a renovation, the cause of the whole of his future. So that if the character is corrupt, misery must come, and the reverse.

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. He that soweth to the flesh shall reap corruption. He that soweth to the spirit shall reap everlasting life." Character draws destiny after it by an almighty magnetism. Character is a fruitful tree, it never ceases bearing, every branch is clustered, but the fruit is either misery or happiness, according to its own vital essence.

II. THE CONSTITUTION OF MORAL MIND SHOWS THIS. Moral mind has at least two faculties. First: *One to recall the past.* Memory gathers up the fragments of our bygone years, so that nothing is lost. Every event that has impressed us, and every conscious act must be reproduced. The law of memory compels us to re-live our past lives. Secondly: *One to feel the past.* The past does not flit before us as shadows on the wall, as images on the glass, making no impression, it falls on conscience, it stirs it into feeling. The soul is compelled to shudder at a wicked past, whilst a virtuous past fills it with a quiet and ineffable delight.

III. THE TEACHING OF HOLY WRIT SHOWS THIS. The Bible is full of the doctrine. The Bible assures us that God will render to every man according to his deeds. (Jos. vii. 20—26; Matt. xxv.; Rom. ii. 6—10.) Sinner, take care, the avenger of blood is at your heels. You may not hear the footfall, for the "avenging deities are shod with wool." They never pause, they never tire, they never mistake their victim.

(No. CVII.)

MATERIAL WEALTH.

"A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children; and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just. Much food is in the tillage of the poor; but there is that is destroyed for want of judgment."—Prov. xiii. 22, 23.

MATERIAL wealth is a good thing. Those who have it not desire it, and struggle earnestly after it. Those who have it, clutch it as a precious treasure. No wise man will underrate it. Whilst, like everything else, it is capable of abuse, it has the power of rendering immense service to the cause of truth and humanity. Sanctimonious hypocrites who have it not denounce it, but wise men value it as a sacred trust. The verses before us lead us to consider it in two aspects:

I. AS ENTAILED BY THE GOOD AND ALIENATED BY THE EVIL. Here we have it, first: *Entailed by the good.* "A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children." It is a characteristic in man that he feels an interest in posterity. The good and evil alike feel an interest in unborn generations. This is an indication of the greatness of man's nature. It is here intimated by Solomon that the good have some *special security* by which their property shall descend to their children's children. A security better than that of legal "bequests." And truly they have, and what is it? The *probable goodness* of their children's children. Goodness may, and ought ever, to descend from sire to son. The strongest purpose and the most earnest prayer of a good man is that it should do so. His endeavour is to train up his children in the way that they should go, to leave in their possession a godly character—a sublimer inheritance this than kingdoms. Now, if his children's children inherit good—

ness, they are sure to hand down their inheritance to posterity intact; it will not be wasted by intemperance, reckless speculation or idle gambling. Goodness is the safest law of entail. Secondly: *Alienated by the evil.* "And the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just." Wickedness, from its very nature, cannot hold property through many generations; the fortunes it inherits must crumble away. My confidence in the righteous government of God and in the ultimate triumphs of Christianity is such, that I regard all the property that wickedness has accumulated, is accumulating, and will accumulate, as "laid up for the just." One day the property of the world will come into the possession of the good. Though the wicked heap up silver as the dust, and prepare raiment as the clay; he may prepare it, but the just shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver. The verses before us lead us to consider material wealth—

II. AS GAINED BY INDUSTRY, AND SQUANDERED BY IMPRUDENCE. First: *As gained by industry.* "Much food is in the tillage of the poor." Every acre of land is full of potential wealth. Skilled industry can make more of one rood of earth, than some men can an acre. God has put man's food not merely in the ground, but in the "tillage." This is a beneficent arrangement. It is a spur to industry. It is a help to the development of manly faculties. If the man who gets not his food by "tillage" were allowed to starve it would be a blessing to the world. Secondly: *As squandered by imprudence.* "But there is that is destroyed for want of judgment." It requires more sense, perhaps, to retain and rightly use property, than to get it. I have known pushing and

unscrupulous dolts make fortunes and lose them:—

"Riches, like insects, while concealed they lie,
Wait but for wings, and in their season fly.
To whom can riches give repute and trust,
Content or pleasure, but the good and just?
Judges and senates have been bought for gold;
Esteem and love were never to be sold."
POPE.

(No. CVIII.)

PARENTAL DISCIPLINE.

"He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes."—Prov. xiii. 24.

THREE things are implied in this text—

I. A TENDENCY IN CHILDREN TO GO WRONG. This tendency is obvious to all. No sooner does the child begin to act as a moral being than he, by his fretfulness, vanity, greed, falseness, indicates the existence of the wrong in him. Whether this tendency is propagated by generation or imparted by social influence, whether it is inbred or imbreathed, is one of the vexed questions of polemic theology. I am disposed to think that the social atmosphere in which the infant is born, in which it receives its first impressions and begins to unfold its faculties, is abundantly sufficient to account for it. In the present domestic atmosphere of the race there float the germs of evil, and who shall say how soon they drop through the eye and ear into the infant soul?

II. THE DUTY OF PARENTS TO DESTROY THIS TENDENCY. This is implied by the injunction, to chasten "*betimes*." First: The wrong tendency is a great evil. It is the springhead of a pestilential river. It is the germ of an upas. It is an incipient fiend. Secondly: The sooner it is de-

stroyed the better. The better for the child, the parent, society, the universe. The longer it continues the deeper it strikes its roots and the more difficult the eradication. It must be done "*betimes*." Thirdly: Its destruction is the work of a parent. This is the grand moral mission of a parent, for which God holds him responsible. He can't delegate it to nurse, teacher, or priest. It is *his* work.

III. THE NECESSITY OF CHASTISEMENT FOR THIS PURPOSE. "He that spareth the rod hateth his son." The rod does not necessarily mean the twig, the cane, or the whip; it is used as the representative of that which inflicts pain. First: *The necessary chastisement involves the infliction of pain.* It may be corporeal pain. There are cases in which the child may be so destitute of the sense of propriety and reason that it could receive no other pain than physical. It may be mental pain. The child may be punished by the restriction of his liberty, the denial of his wishes, or the frown of his parents, by the word of reproof, oftentimes in a way far more painful than any corporeal infliction. What is wanted in chastisement is *pain*. There must be pain. A rod of some kind, either material or mental. And the parent who does not inflict pain has not the true love for his child. He "hateth his son." Secondly: *The infliction of pain by love.* The infliction of pain from caprice or angry passions is no chastisement. Evil cannot be expelled by evil. The devil cannot exorcise the devil. The child must see that the pain inflicted gives more pain to the parent than to him. The infliction of pain must be felt as the "strange work" of the parent—a work foreign to his nature. Children have been called rough diamonds.

Parents are to polish them, and they must be neither struck unskilfully nor left uncut.

"The voice of parents is the voice of gods,
For to their children they are heaven's lieutenants;
Made fathers not for common uses merely
Of procreation (beasts and birds would be As noble then as we are); but to steer
The waning freight of youth through storms and dangers,
Which with full sails they bear upon, and straighten
The mortal line of life they bend so often.
For these are we made fathers, and for these
May challenge duty on our children's part.
Obedience is the sacrifice of angels,
Whose form you carry."

SHAKESPEARE.

(No. CIX.)

THE SATISFACTION OF THE BODY DETERMINED BY THE CONDITION OF THE SOUL.

"The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want."—Prov. xiii. 25.

BODILY satisfaction is an essential element in our happiness so long as we are in this world. The text implies that the satisfaction of the body depends upon the condition of the soul, and this is a great truth, greatly neglected. Its obviousness would come out by considering what bodily satisfaction requires. We observe—

I. BODILY HEALTH. No food can *satisfy* a diseased body, a body whose organs and functions are out of order. But the condition of the soul has much to do with physical health. "A sound heart is the light of the flesh." * The anxieties, illtempers, recriminations, impure passions of a wicked heart will soon reduce the body to disease, feebleness, and ruin. On the other hand, a true, vir-

* See HOMILIST, vol. iv., second series, p. 647.

tuous, and happy soul tends to physical health. "A merry heart doeth good like medicine, maketh a cheerful countenance; but a broken spirit drieth the bones." One thought can disorganize a healthy body and do much to restore a diseased one.

II. **BODILY SUPPLIES.** The supplies necessary to satisfy the body should be—First: *Of a right kind.* A body restless with hunger would scarcely be satisfied with confectionery. Now, the condition of the soul has much to do with the *kind* of food. The soul not only modifies our natural appetites, but creates artificial ones, and hence supplies provisions for the body which are unnatural and unhealthy. The soul, by its working on the body's appetites, has brought to the body's table compounds unsatisfying and deleterious. Secondly: *A right amount.* An insufficient amount, even of right provisions, would leave the body unsatisfied. But the question of sufficiency also depends greatly on the soul. Indolence, extravagance, intemperance, bad management, often so reduce men's material resources that they are left utterly destitute of the necessary food. These thoughts, we think, give an important meaning to the text, "The righteous eateth to the satisfying of his soul: but the belly of the wicked shall want." "Truly then godliness is profitable unto all things," &c. A corrupt soul will evermore have a dissatisfied body.

(No. CX.)

HOUSEWIFERY.

"Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands."—Prov. xiv. 1.

WOMAN, in these days of novel-scribbling and rhyming sentimentalities, is so often paraded in

literature that we are loth to write the sacred word. Our own great dramatist has said,—

"'Tis beauty that doth oft make woman proud;
'Tis virtue that doth make them most admired;
'Tis modesty that makes them seem divine!"

THE text leads us to consider housewifery; its great power and necessary qualifications.

I. **ITS GREAT POWER.** First: *It can build up.* "Every wise woman buildeth her house." A good wife builds up her house (1) *materially.* By her economy, industry, and wise management, she increases its material resources. Wordsworth describes such a housewife:—

"She was a woman of stirring life,
Whose heart was in her house; two wheels she had,
Of antique form: this large for spinning wool,—
That small for flax; and if one wheel had rest,
It was because the other was at work."

A good wife builds up her house (2) *spiritually.* A good wife by her example, her spirit, her admonitions, her reproofs, her prayers, builds up in her children a noble character; she thus rears in her house a very temple of industry, intelligence, and worship. Thus she becomes the queen of a little empire, where beauty, love, virtue, and reason reign. Secondly: *It can pull down.* "The foolish plucketh it down with her hands." There are women who bring their houses to ruin. By their miserable tempers, and degrading habits, they ruin their husbands, their children, they make the home the haunt of fiends.

II. **ITS NECESSARY QUALIFICATION.** What is the necessary qualification for a good housewife?—"wisdom." Every wise woman buildeth her house. Wisdom implies two things.

First: *Using the right means.* The means she employs to build up her house are not inconsistent with the chaste in love, the true in statement, the honest in effort. Implies, secondly: *Using the right means for a right end.* The end not to pamper appetites, to feed vanity and pride, but to elevate the household, bless society, and honour God. The hope of England, and of the world, rests on such housewifery. Kind Heaven promote it! In the East humanity makes, through centuries, scarcely one inch of true progress. In the West it moves onwards with the strides of a giant. Why this? In the former there is no housewifery, in the latter there is.

(No. CXI.)

HUMAN CONDUCT.

"He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the Lord: but he that is perverse in his ways despiseth him."—Prov. xiv. 2.

I. MEN DIFFER WIDELY IN THEIR DAILY CONDUCT. First: *Some men walk uprightly.* Walking uprightly implies, (1) Moral strength. The man is not bent and crooked by the infirmities of sin, or the weight of depravity. He has the thorough step of a man. (2) Conscious rectitude. He does not bow down his head, as if ashamed to look his neighbour in the face. He is as open as the day, and as fearless as the sun.

Secondly: *Some walk perversely.* "They are perverse in their ways." They are crooked in their purposes, policies, and performances. There is nothing true, honest, noble, in their course, or in their bearing.

II. MEN REVEAL THEIR HEART TOWARDS GOD IN THEIR DAILY WALK. "He that walketh in his uprightness feareth the Lord; but he that is perverse in his ways, despiseth him." First: *Right conduct springs from a right feeling towards God.* The man that walketh uprightly feareth the Lord. There is no true morality without religion. Piety is the first principle of all rectitude. Atheism can have nothing binding in its code of laws—nothing virtuous in its conduct. All good living must have respect to God. Secondly: *Wrong conduct springs from wrong feeling towards God.*

"He that is perverse in his ways, despiseth him." The wrong doer has no feeling of respect for God. He ignores Him as much as he can. Thus it is, that in the daily conduct of men, you can see their state toward God. You may know how men feel inwardly toward their Maker, by observing how they deal outwardly with each other.

CONCLUSION: The generating in human hearts supreme love to God, is the only effective way to promote true morality in men—morality in the family, in the market, in the nation, in the world.

PANGS OF GUILT.

"And oh! that pang, where more than madness lies!
The worm that will not sleep, and never dies.
Thought of the gloomy day and ghastly night,
That dreads the darkness, and yet loathes the light;
That winds around, and tears the quivering heart,
Ah! wherefore not consume it, and depart?"—BYRON.

Theological Notes and Queries.

OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

LOST SCRIPTURES.

Querist.—We heard it stated the other day that a large portion of Old Testament Scripture has been lost. Can this be true?—**ENQUIRER.**

Replicant.—In answer to Enquirer, we have to say that what he heard is perfectly true. Without doubt a large portion of the Bible has been lost. We give below the names of books that are actually mentioned in the extant books of the Old Testament:—

1. The Book of the Wars of the Lord. (Num. xxi. 14.)
2. The Book of Jasher. (Jos. x. 13; 2 Sam. i. 18.)
3. The Book of Nathan, the Prophet. (1 Chron. xxix. 29.)
4. The Book of Gad, the Seer. (*Ibid.*)
5. The Book of the Acts of Solomon. (1 Kings xi. 41.)
6. The Prophecy of Ahijah, the Shilomite. (2 Chron. ix. 29.)

7. The Visions of Iddo, the Seer. (*Ibid.*)

8. The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Judah. (1 Kings xv. 29, and *passim.*)

9. The Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel. (1 Kings xv. 31, and *passim.*)

10. The Prophecy of Jonah; *probably* written. (2 Kings xiv. 25.)

11. The Book of Shemaiah the Prophet. (2 Chron. xii. 15.)

12. The Book of Iddo, the Seer, concerning Genealogies. (*Ibid.*)

13. The Story of the Prophet Iddo. (2 Chron. xiii. 22. Same writer, but title of book different.)

14. The Book of Jehu, the son of Hannai. (2 Chron. xx. 34.)

15. The Acts of Uziah, by Isaiah, the son of Amos. (2 Chron. xxvi. 22.)

16. The Lamentations of Jeremiah for Josiah. (2 Chron. xxxv. 25.)

MANIFESTATION OF GUILT.

"Behold her guilty looks; for guilt will speak,
Though tongues were out of use."—SHAKESPEARE.

UNHAPPINESS OF GUILT.

"When at first from virtue's path we stray,
How shrinks the feeble heart with sad dismay;
More bold at length, by powerful habit led,
Careless and sated, the dreary wilds we tread;
Behold the gaping gulf of sin with scorn,
And plunging deep, to endless death are borne."

JAMES SCOTT.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE PASTOR'S NOTE-BOOK, OR PREPARATIONS FOR THE PULPIT. By the late Rev. B. KENT, of Norwood, Surrey. London: W. Kent and Co.

THE vulgarity of commonplace is never so conspicuous as in a sermon. A commonplace man is bad enough; a commonplace book is worse; but a common-place sermon is an infliction which long-suffering humanity cannot away with. As the monotonous roll of a ship nauseates the stomach, so the inevitable platitudes of a dull preacher disturb the soul. To hear them is a heavy trial—to read them, is like drinking a solution of stuffy hassocks and fluffy cushions. We live over again the agonies of other days, and the savour of an old prison-house fill our nostrils as we read. It has become the fashion of late to decry the sermon as a comparatively unimportant portion of religious service; we do not wonder at it, the sermon is too often a very unimportant portion of religious service, and a very tedious portion also. But, like the change from a bad atmosphere to the fresh mountain-top; like a draught from the pure spring, after long toiling in a land where no water is; as the voice of a friend to one in captivity; so is the book before us compared to the ordinary "volume of sermons" which our shelves do *not* hold. Vigorous thought, bright imagination, sound learning, pure philanthropy, true piety, fill the pages from beginning to end. The book is the production of a mind of the very highest order, and, as we read, the individuality of the author seems to intensify itself, until we realize to ourselves a singularly beautiful, original, and striking character of thought. Simplicity and depth, calmness and fervour, strength and tenderness, are not often found in combination; but here they are all apparent, conspicuously and harmoniously blending. Such a book as this is better than a dozen "systems of theology;" we gain more from it, just as our sympathies are awakened by "one touch of nature" more than by all the philosophical essays that were ever written. It is, of course, impossible in such a notice as this to give extracts from these sermons which would convey anything like an adequate idea of them. We can only recommend them most earnestly, with the conviction that every reader will heartily endorse our opinion.

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LECTURES ON THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS. By the late **WILLIAM LINDSAY, D.D.** Edinburgh: William Oliphant and Co.

HERE are two splendid volumes of profoundly thoughtful, and thoroughly scholarly, criticism, upon one of the most important sections of New Testament writing. A paragraph in the masterly introduction indicates the plan of investigation which the author has carried out in this work. "In studying," he says, "any book of the Bible, the first thing which you should do is to read it completely through in the original. And your object at this first reading should be, not so much to master every difficulty which may present itself, as to acquire a clear conception of the general scope and plan of the whole. And when you have thus examined the greater outline of the plan, and gathered all the information which you can find respecting the author, and age, and destination of the book, then you are prepared to enter upon the minute examination of every passage; and you will be able, with the blessing of God, both to see the meaning of the separate parts, and to trace their relation to the entire design. Indeed, you will form juster ideas of any object, whether it be a complicated piece of machinery, or a spacious building, or an extended district of country, by first taking a general view of the whole, and then applying yourself to the examination of all the parts in detail." The author's eye, not only measured the whole scope of the epistle, but afterwards minutely examined the minutest part. The work of Dr. Brown, on the Hebrews, we greatly value, and strongly recommend. Taken as a whole, and omitting its theological bias, it has no superior. It is, perhaps, more homiletic than this, but it certainly does not supersede the work before us. Dr. Lindsay throws much new light on passages lying under the haze of old Jewish modes of thought and speech. The preliminary Lecture is a master-piece, and its argument for the Pauline authorship of the Epistle is fuller and stronger than we have met elsewhere.

ECCE DEUS. Essays on the Life and Doctrine of Jesus Christ. With Controversial Notes on "Ecce Homo." Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 38, George Street.

THE following extract from the author's preface will put our readers in possession of the object of this work, and the spirit which inspires it:—"A careful consideration of the various points raised in 'Ecce Homo,' induced the present writer to undertake a re-survey of the life and doctrine of Jesus Christ. He found, however, that he could not occupy the stand-point from which 'Ecce Homo' had been written, without, as it appeared to him, ignoring the mystery of the incarnation, and thus putting himself into a false relation to all subsequent facts in Christian history. The following pages will show that on several

points the writer finds himself in perfect coincidence with the author of 'Ecce Homo;' and he ventures to believe that on those points upon which the differences are irreconcilable, he has not been betrayed into a tone which is inconsistent with the respect due to the finest genius and the frankest candour." The author further informs us, that he has proceeded in his work upon the four following convictions. First, that it is not merely difficult, but absolutely impossible, rightly to survey the life and work of Jesus Christ, without distinctly acknowledging the unprecedented conditions under which Jesus Christ became incarnate. Second, that those conditions can alone account for, and are essential to, a true interpretation of the entire doctrine and phenomena associated with the name of Jesus Christ. Third, that those conditions, and the whole course which they inaugurated (the miraculous conception, the doctrine, the miracle, the death, and the resurrection, constitute a *unity* which *necessitates* the conclusion that Jesus Christ was God incarnate; and, fourth, that the author of "Ecce Homo" having overlooked or ignored these conditions, has worked from a wrong centre, and reached several sophistical and untenable conclusions. Although this work does not profess to be a reply to "Ecce Homo," it should be read in connection with that celebrated production. "Ecce Deus," although vigorously orthodox, is free from the phrases of technical theology, and written in a style of remarkable clearness and force. When we say that in thought, style, and power, it is a match for "Ecce Homo," we accord it no small praise.

NIGHT: A Poem. By GEORGE GILFILLAN, M.A. London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder, 27, Paternoster Row.

A WOMAN SOLD: and other Poems. By AUGUSTA WEBSTER. London and Cambridge: Macmillan and Co.

HYMNS AND SONGS FOR THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH: and Poems. By EMMA JANE WORBOISE. London: James Clarke and Co., 13, Fleet Street.

HERE we have three volumes of poetry. Elsewhere we have said that we judge of poetry as we judge of beauty—by the general impression it makes upon our emotional nature. We shrink at the idea of having the object that captivates us questioned and cross-questioned at the cold bar of intellect. When our heart swells and surges under the gales of true poetry, your metres, artistic canons, analogical proprieties, and all else pertaining to mere *poetics*, go for nothing. Those who have read, as we have, the prose works of the Rev. George Gilfillan, could not fail to feel that his nature was charged with the poetic genius. His fine imagination, his exquisite sensibilities, his keen eye for analogies, his delicate sense of artistic proportions, and

his wonderful faculty for bringing things into strange and startling combinations, all of which, we presume, are constituents of a poetic nature, characterize all his prose writings. We pronounce "Night," a magnificent poem. The work consists of nine books, the subjects of which are "Night and God," "Night and Man," "Night a Revealer to the Eye," "Night a Revealer to the Telescope," "The Joys of Night," "The Terrors of Night," "The Poets of Night," "The Children of Night," and "Night Lost in Day." The affluent imagery, the immense variety of allusions, historic, scientific, literary, the grand catholicity, and the reverent devoutness of this poem will give it a permanent place amongst the choicest works of English bards.—"A WOMAN SOLD," and other Poems contains miscellaneous productions. Most of the pieces are excellent, not a few are of a very superior description.—"HYMNS AND SONGS." This books contains some pleasant rhymes of a religious character.

CONVERSATIONS ON CHURCH ESTABLISHMENTS. By the Rev. JOHN GUTHRIE, M.A. Arthur Miall, 18, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street.

As the HOMILIST sides neither with conventional nonconformity, nor existing State Churchism, its pronouncement upon such works as this is ruled by other and higher reasons. Mr. Guthrie has in a Socratic form given us one of the best works that has ever appeared on the subject. The spirit of fair-play marks every page; it is crowded with information. The style is remarkably terse and telling, and the whole is imbued with a spirit of catholic Christianity. We heartily recommend it to every Churchman.

THE SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL HISTORY OF OUR REDEEMED WORLD, or the "Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him." By the Author of "Works upon the Books of Genesis and Job." William Macintosh, 24, Paternoster Row.

HERE is a large title to a large volume, but what it is all about, we positively cannot tell. We have tried to read it, but cannot. There is a great deal, we observe, in it about "the seals," the "trumpets," "Babylon," and "the harlots," and all that. Whilst the author interprets prophecy, he should get somebody to interpret him—we cannot.

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF THE HON. GEORGE W. GORDON, late of Jamaica. By the Rev. DUNCAN FLETCHER. Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

THOSE who wish to know more of one whose fate has already awakened so much deep and general interest, will be glad to welcome this little work, giving a full, consecutive, though short account of his eventful life.



A HOMILY

ON

The Object of Soul-Redemptive Faith : A Person—not Propositions.

“This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.”—John vi. 29.

VOLUMES have been written explanatory of Faith, yet no sane man requires one single word in order to understand it. He knows it as he knows love, hope, fear, and every other natural state of mind, by his own consciousness. What inner feeling reveals to the soul your logic clouds rather than illumines, intuitive sentiments burn brightly as stars in the firmament within. From childhood up, man's every-day life is a life of faith, and it is too real and vital a thing with him to require explanations. If there be a soul that has it not, the study of all the explanatory works of the world's ablest theologians would never reveal it. The grand work, therefore, of the Christian teacher, is not to give a philosophic exposition of its nature, but to direct it to the true *object*, the object on which the well-being of humanity depends.

What is that object? Is it a Proposition or a Person? This is the vital question. Not—I venture to assert—a *proposition*, though representing the greatest facts and the

divinest principles, no, not even a system of such propositions. It is a Person, and that Person no one less, no one else than the God-man. Our doctrine is, that faith—faith in the sense of *trust* exercised on Him—is the only genuine Christian faith, the only faith that will effectuate the moral redemption of the soul. A man may believe in all the facts of Christ's life, and in all the doctrines of the Christian system, and yet not have the faith which the Gospel urges, and the spiritual restoration of man requires. I admit, nay, I proclaim with conviction, that faith in such propositions concerning Christ is necessary to bring Him in a life-like form to the eye of the human soul, but such faith is no more Christian faith than industry is wealth, or study scholarship. Many labour industriously for riches who die paupers, many study earnestly for the honours of scholarship who die without such distinctions, and many believe in propositions, revealing Christ, who have no faith whatever in Him. In illustration of this doctrine, I submit the following general remarks.

That faith in the *Person* of Christ rather than in *Propositions* concerning Him, is—

I. THE MORALLY TRANSFORMATIVE POWER. That a moral transformation of soul is essential to the true freedom, dignity, and blessedness of man, is demonstrated by universal experience, attested by our own consciousness, and declared with remarkable force and frequency by the Word of God. We must be “born again,” “renewed in the spirit of our mind,” “changed into the image of the Lord.” A new heart, life, character, are involved in the change demanded—nothing less. Now faith, neither in a proposition nor in a system of propositions, neither in a fact, nor in a series of facts, can effect this moral revolution. For what is essential to this transformation? The *generating in the heart of a love for goodness*. Our loves are our masters. They inspire our activities, they work our faculties as they please. The strongest love is evermore the monarch of the soul and the moulder of the character. The love of sin, in the form of carnal pleasure,

self-aggrandisement, and gratification, is the sovereign passion of depraved hearts. To dethrone this despot, and to expel him from the soul, there must be generated within and fostered to an all conquering passion, a love of goodness. Can faith in propositions about virtue and holiness ever accomplish this? Never. The soul must have goodness incarnated and bodied forth in a living personality, must see its radiant countenance, feel its warm breath, and listen to the thrilling music of its lips, in order to feel its heart captivation. In Christ it has all this, and nowhere else. In Him you have the "Beauty of the Lord," love the tenderest, the deepest, the most universal and unconquerable, blended with a purity radiant with the effulgence of the Godhead. He is "The Truth." This is his title. He is "The Truth" respecting man, embodying in his life the ideal of humanity, embodying what God intended all men to be. He is "The Truth" respecting God, the "brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." In Him you have what divinity *really* is, what humanity *really* should be. The aroma of all virtues in the universe stream from his robes. The accents of heaven tone their music in all his utterance. The spirit of all goodness is his very life. It is as the eye of faith looks at Him that the soul sees what sin is, and loathes it—what goodness is, and loves it. Here is the process. *Beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we are changed into the same image, &c.* The living Christ, not a dead creed, is the magnet to draw, and the power to transform the fallen souls of men. The heart wants heart, not dogma. Heart alone can touch heart. No power can change heart but heart. The true creed for man is the Christ of God, the Bible for man is not letter, but life, not parchments and papers, but the biography of Jesus.

That faith in the *Person* of Christ rather than in *Propositions* concerning him is—

II. THE SOUL-SATISFYING CONDITION. There are certain elements in unregenerated souls, such as sense of dependence,

consciousness of wrong, and cravings for objects of love that keep it in restless anxiety. What can answer and allay these? What can satisfy the soul's *sense of dependence*? Our sense of dependence is deep, ineradicable, and ever operative. Constant and often terribly painful is man's consciousness that both his being and his well-being depend every moment upon what is outside of himself. Every day he feels that he has been leaning on objects external to himself that has failed him. All on which he is depending, he sees floating away on the resistless tide of destiny. His soul craves some *permanent* resting-place, some rock on which to stand amidst the surging sea of change, some object on which to centre his soul in implicit confidence. Without this all inner satisfaction is an impossibility. What will give it? Will faith in propositions give it? Never. The soul cannot feel itself secure in words. Words however true are but cold statuary, the heart cannot repose on marble. Trust in Christ meets the want. Trust in Him means confidence in infinite love, unerring wisdom, and almighty power. What again can allay the soul's *sense of guilt*? Man has not only sinned, but he is *conscious* of it, and the consciousness is universal. It is felt by the strong as well as by the nervous, by the cultured as well as by the rustic, by men of genius as well as by men of the humbler type of mind. This consciousness is connected with restlessness and distress of soul. In it is the serpent of remorse, and before it looms the thunderstorm of punishment. What will remove this? Will faith in any proposition do this? No. What is wanted is a new consciousness, which, in its rising flow, will submerge the old, and this can only come through a new life, with its new affections, purposes, and aspirations. This new life is in Christ, and faith in Him is the instrument of conveying it into the soul. "He that believeth in me, out of his belly—his being—shall flow rivers of living water." These rivers of new thoughts and loves, and hopes and aims, will drown the old. The man who comes to love Christ, and love for Him can only come through faith in Him, gets his sense of guilt removed, the threatening

clouds of his soul dispelled, and his heavens brightened into hope; believing in Him, he rejoices with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. What can satisfy man's craving for objects of love? The deepest hunger of man is the hunger of the heart for some object on which to centre its affections. As the bee searches the flowers of nature for honey, the soul is ever in quest of some object on which to settle its love. But what object can do it? The laws of our nature show that there is no object under the sun on which the soul can settle its affections with an unbroken repose, and all history shows that it has never done so. Men are nowhere fully satisfied with their loves. Christ meets the case, and He only; on Him the heart can centre its affections. Hearts can find no true repose in words. Syllables cannot satisfy souls. As the mariner's needle quivers in restless motion until it finds the pole, so the affections of the heart will heave in agitation until they find infinite excellence embodied in a living personality. Faith in the Personal Christ, then, is essential to soul-satisfaction. When souls are brought to faith in Him, they exultingly exclaim, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him." What, too, will meet the *sense of distance from God*, which is so soul-disturbing? Men are separated from God, not of course in a physical sense, this is impossible. Nothing but annihilation could detach us essentially from the Infinite. We are in Him, and He in us, and this by the necessity of being. The estrangement of which we speak is moral, an estrangement of sympathy, and heart and life, and of this we all are conscious. This separation is the very essence of sin and the font of woe. Its consciousness is universal and terribly distressing. Separate the stream from the fountain, and its existence ceases; cut a branch from the root, and it dies; detach a planet from its centre and it rushes into chaos. God is the fountain root, centre of the soul, and if detached from Him its ruin is inevitable and complete. What can bring the wandering spirit back into fellowship with the Great Father? What keeps it away? Indifference, fear, enmity. What can remove these? Faith in Propositions?

Never. Christ, not doctrines, is "the way." Christ, not doctrines is the "Mediator" to reconcile. God in *Him*, not in Propositions, is "reconciling the world to Himself." Faith in the Person of Christ brings the soul and God together, and the twain become one again. Men must come to Christ, not to theological systems or ecclesiastical ritualities if they would come back to God. He is "the door" into the loving home of the great Father of souls.

That faith in the *Person* of Christ rather than in *Propositions* concerning Him, is,—

III. THE GRAND DEMAND OF THE GOSPEL. It has been said by a very able modern theological writer, that in more than thirty passages of the Gospel of St. John, we find with reference to Christ the expression, *trusting to Me, or trusting to Him, or trusting to the Son*. The same language is employed by the other Evangelists, and also by Peter and Paul. Faith in Him is represented as the great demand which God makes on men. "This is the work of God that ye believe on *Him* whom He hath sent." Faith in Him is represented as the grand condition of salvation. "He that believeth on *Me* hath everlasting life." He that believeth on *Him* "is not condemned ; he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Faith in *Him* is represented as the means of usefulness. "He that believeth on *Me*, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do." Faith in *Him* is represented as the great source of spiritual comfort. "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God believe also in *Me*." *He*, not doctrine, is represented as the grand subject of religious commemoration. On the night on which He was betrayed, He turned the minds of his disciples away from the old subject of religious commemoration, and centred them on Himself. Taking the elements used in the Passover, He said, "Do this in remembrance of *ME*," as if He had said, "This is the last night of Judaism, my people henceforth, must remember *Me*, a person rather than things." He rang the

knell of letterisms and ritualisms that night—the religion of humanity, hence on, had to do with a PERSON. *He*, not doctrine, is represented as the grand subject of the Christian ministry “Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.”

Sufficient has, I conceive, been advanced to show that the true faith of the Gospel means faith—*trust*—in Christ, and not belief in *propositions*, whatever the character and amount of fact or doctrine such Propositions may represent.

CONCLUSION.—This subject explains, First: *The complaints of religious professors concerning their faith*. “We feel that our faith is very feeble, how difficult it is to believe! Oh, how weak our faith is! We cannot take hold upon the promises.” Who has not heard expressions like these in every religious circle? Such complaints are prevalent. What do they indicate? This:—That their faith is directed to *Propositions* rather than to the *Person*. Do you ever hear the child of noble parents, parents whose love is genuine, and whose honesty incorruptible, say, “I have a great difficulty in believing in my father or my mother, a great difficulty in “laying hold upon their promises”? Do you ever hear a wife say in relation to a husband who has always appeared to her to be incapable of doing a wrong act, “I am distressed that I cannot have a stronger faith in him”? Such things would be the greatest of social anomalies in this anomalous world. Who feels any difficulty in believing in a person of *undoubted* goodness and integrity? If the faith of religious people were directed to *Christ*, the incarnation of all excellence, rather than to *creeds*, we should not hear all this sentimental jargon. What is there in Christ to prevent you believing in Him? Is there not everything to enlist your cordial and implicit trust? In truth, if you believe in Him you will accept his doctrines, even though you cannot understand them, and acquiesce in his procedure, although you fail to appreciate or even to discern its wisdom. If I believe in a man, I take his word. If I believe in Christ,

I accept his revelations. Belief in Him, is, in fact, necessary in order (1) to believe the truth and (2) appreciate the meaning of his word.

This subject explains, Secondly : *The weakness of the Church in its endeavours to Christianize the world.* The nominal Church, in all its branches, is confessedly active, and has been active for ages. It does a great deal of a certain kind of work, but not much, we trow, of the work Christ demanded, the work the world wants, which is to *cast out its devils*. The fiends of selfishness, carnality, pride, hypocrisy, avarice, unbelief, practical atheism, are they not as rampant in the world as ever, notwithstanding all the trials of the Church to expel them? Civilization has given them more attractive costumes, and more delicate instruments than they had in barbaric ages, but their power is as great and their aims as deadly as ever. Why has the Church not succeeded? When Christ descended from the Mount of Transfiguration, He found that his disciples had been trying to cast out the devil from a man, but had failed, and on their asking Him the cause of their failure, He said, "Because of your unbelief, for verily, I say unto you, if you had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, remove hence unto yonder place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible to you." The weakness of the Church is its lack of faith in Christ. The Church, in truth, has talked a deal about its faith, has fought for its faith, has bled for its faith, aye, and more, has even *persecuted* for its faith, but what has been its faith? Faith in some verbal articles, in some cases "thirty-nine," in others more, and in others less, rather than in the living, loving, *Personal* Son of Man and Son of God.

This subject explains, Thirdly : *The cause of all divisions in the nominal Church.* The *sect* life in the Church, whatever may be said to the contrary, I hold to be one of the greatest evils of the world. It is one of the chief devils of Christendom. It narrows the sphere of charity, it nurtures a heartless bigotry, it obstructs the progress of universal truth,

it misrepresents the Spirit of Christ. This evil is begotten of a certain faith in certain propositions—propositions in some cases relating to metaphysical theology, and in other cases referring to some ceremonial observance. Even an idea about *water* creates sects, and the smaller the idea that creates a sect the more *venomous* that sect becomes. If all the members of all the Churches believed with a living faith in the One Personal Christ, such miserable divisions would cease. Christ would become the centre. Diversity of opinion must ever exist so long as mind is mind; but diversity of opinion is the charm of *genuine* fellowship. Does diversity of opinion amongst brothers and sisters in the same family lead to separation when all hearts centre in their parents? Never. Where a common love rules, diversity of sentiment heightens the harmony. Diversity of opinion may be one of the great charms in celestial conferences.

This subject explains, Fourthly : *The true method of religious teaching*. If Christ is the great Object of faith, the grand work of the religious teacher should be so to present the *Personal* Christ as to inspire the loving confidence of men. The biography of Christ must be our Bible. In truth, what is all that is written in the tracts of that wondrous volume that we call the Bible, apart from Christ? Nothing of any vital value. The casket without the jewel, the royal robes without the monarch, the body without the soul. Our every text should be from the biography of Christ, our every subject Christ *Himself*. The truth as it is in Jesus, as a *Person* the world wants, not as it is in the books of theologians, or even in Moses and the prophets, but as it is in Jesus, a living, symmetrical, divine, soul-attractive, soul-satisfying thing.

Brothers, let us preach, not traditional doctrinism, or the Christianity of the sects, but the Christ of the Bible—the Christ, not as He is caricatured in portraits taken in the murky studios of theologians and ecclesiastics, but as He appears livingly photographed on the pages of the evangelic records.

A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonising their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of its wisest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

SUBJECT : *Paul at Cæsarea before Festus.*

"But after two years Porcius Festus came into Felix' room: and Felix, willing to shew the Jews a pleasure, left Paul bound. Now, when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Cæsarea to Jerusalem. Then the high priest, and the chief of the Jews, informed him against Paul, and besought him, and desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him," &c., &c.—Acts xxiv. 27, xxv. 1—12.

THE greed and love of popularity of Felix had kept Paul a bound prisoner in Cæsarea for "two" long years. Hoping to receive money for his liberation, and at the same time to restore his waning popularity among the Jews, this corrupt judge kept an innocent man all this time in bondage. Time, which works decay in all mortal things, wears out the power of despots, and rots the rods of tyrants and the hands that hold them, at last struck this despot down. When Porcius Festus was sent as a successor to Felix by Nero, the principal inhabitants of Cæsarea went up to Rome to accuse Felix, and condign punishment would have befallen him had it not been for the intercession which his brother Pallas made on his behalf with Nero. Wretched man! He obtained neither gain nor popularity, the two things he sought, in keeping the apostle in chains. He sought to conciliate the Jews by injustice, but their enmity towards him grew to a strength that struggled for his ruin. The plans of wickedness are doomed to frustration; sooner or later they will float as miserable

wrecks on the stream of destiny. Festus comes into the place of Felix. From the scriptural narrative, as well as from Josephus, we infer that he was a better man and a more upright judge. His official life at Cæsarea seems to have been very short. He commenced office in the autumn of A.D. 60 and died in the summer of A.D. 62. The verses before us bring to our view the *antecedent*, the *attendant*, and the *resultant* circumstances connected with Paul's appearance before this Festus.

I. THE ANTECEDENT CIRCUMSTANCES CONNECTED WITH PAUL'S APPEARANCE BEFORE FESTUS. Here we have to notice, first, *the arrival of Festus and his visit to Jerusalem*. "Now, when Festus was come into the province, after three days he ascended from Cæsarea to Jerusalem." After arriving, about the year A.D. 60, as we have said, in Cæsarea, the seat of the civil government, and continuing there "three days," he goes up to Jerusalem, the metropolis of the Jewish people. This prompt departure to the holy city arose, perhaps, not only from a curiosity to see a place so famous in the history of empires, but to study the spirit, institutions, and manners of a people with whose civil and political interests he would have, henceforth, much to do. Another circumstance connected with his appearance before Festus is—

Secondly: *The appeal of the Jews to Festus during his stay in Jerusalem concerning Paul*. "Then the High Priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul, and besought him, and desired favour against him that he would send for him to Jerusalem, laying wait in the way to kill him." Two things are manifest in these verses:—(1.) The national importance which the Sanhedrim attached to Paul. More than two years had passed away since they raised the mob of Jerusalem against him and since they followed him down to Cæsarea, and, with Tertullus, appeared against him before Felix. One might have thought that the changes which two years make in thought and feeling, and all human things, would not only have destroyed their interest in Paul, but

have almost effaced his very name from their memory. Had it been merely personal enmity they had towards him it would have undoubtedly been so; but it was the religious influence of this man, working wherever he had been, and working mightily in Jerusalem, before their eyes every day, that kept him before them as a terrible religious antagonist—one who was sapping the very foundation of their religious system, prestige, and power. Their opposition is a tribute to Paul's mighty influence. Another thing manifest in these verses is—(2.) The miserable servility and hypocritical cunning of religious bigotry—"And desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem." The original language conveys the idea that they made this request as a *special* favour. The arguments they employed are not given. No doubt they bowed before Festus as cringing, fawning sycophants, urging every consideration that the genius of bigotry could suggest that was likely to tell effectively upon the mind of the Roman. They did not say, of course, what is stated in the last clause of the verse, that they were "laying wait in the way to kill him." Oh, no! They pleaded, no doubt, for justice, not murder. The nefarious plan recorded in chapter xxiii. 15, appears now to have been under the direct patronage of the "High Priest and the chief of the Jews." Another circumstance connected with his appearance before Festus is—

Thirdly : *The reply of Festus to the request of the Jews made to him at Jerusalem.* "But Festus answered that Paul should be kept at Cæsarea, and that he himself would depart shortly *thither*. Let them, therefore," said he, "which among you are able go down with me, and accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him." Festus refuses. He does not say why he refuses. Perhaps he had one of those *sentiments* which is always strong but indefinable, incapable of being thrown into any intelligible proposition, and which is ever the offspring and the organ of God in the human soul. Anyhow, had he not refused, in all human probability Paul would have been murdered. The

Divine promise that had been made to him, that he should visit Rome, would have been frustrated. (Chap. xxiii. 11.) But though he does not give the reason of his refusal he promises an early trial, for "he would depart shortly *thither*." And he requests all who had the power to go down with him to Cæsarea, and to bring their accusation against Paul, "if there be any wickedness in him." The word wickedness is not in the original: the phrase should have been, "if there be anything in him;" that is, if there be any wrong in him.

II. THE ATTENDANT CIRCUMSTANCES CONNECTED WITH PAUL'S APPEARANCE BEFORE FESTUS. "And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, he went down unto Cæsarea; and the next day sitting on the judgment-seat, commanded Paul to be brought." Instead of "ten days," the margin reads "not more than eight or ten days," and most critics regard this as the true text. Festus in this shows himself to be a man to his word and a man prompt and punctual in action. He had promised to be there shortly; there he is. The very day after his arrival at Cæsarea he is "on the judgment-seat," and commands "Paul to be brought." Two circumstances are to be noticed here as Paul stands before the judgment-seat.

First: *The charges of Paul's enemies and his denial of them.* (1.) Their charges. "And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove." The expression "stood round about" indicates the eagerness with which they crowded around their long-lost victim. They felt a fiendish pleasure in having him as they thought once more within their reach. "They laid many and grievous complaints against Paul." What were they? Judging from the answer which Paul made, they were the old ones—heresy, sacrilege, and treason; crimes against the law of Moses, against the temple, and against the Emperor. But whatever they were, the historian says that they were such that they could "not prove." (2.) His denial of

these charges. "While he answered for himself, Neither against the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against Cæsar, have I offended anything at all." The way which he met those same charges before Felix is recorded in chapter xxiv. 10—21. His manner of treating them now was perhaps substantially the same; hence the historian does not record his defence. The other circumstance to be noticed here as Paul stands before the judgment-seat is—

Secondly : *The request of Festus to Paul, and his refusal.*

(1.) The request of Festus. "But Festus willing to do to the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?" So far, we have discovered nothing censurable in the conduct of this Festus, but here evil shows itself. Popularity appears here dearer to him than justice. He had seen enough to feel in his conscience that Paul was an innocent man, and that he ought in all justice to be acquitted forthwith, but, for the sake of getting a good name with the Jews, he proposes to Paul another trial, and another trial at Jerusalem. Pilate condemned Christ, "to do the Jews a pleasure." Felix kept Paul bound two years "to do the Jews a pleasure," and Festus, "to do the Jews a pleasure," was willing to deliver an innocent man up to the murderous hands of his malignant enemies. All that can be said in palliation of the request of Festus is, that he did not enforce it, he merely submitted it to the choice of Paul. (2.) The refusal of Paul. In his refusal there are three things worthy of notice. (a) His demand for political justice. "Then said Paul, I stand at Cæsar's judgment-seat where I ought to be judged." The tribunal of Festus was, in authority and name, the bar of the Roman Emperor, who went under the general designation of Cæsar, from Julius Cæsar, the first of the dynasty. The apostle had committed no crime cognizable by the Jews, could hope for no justice from them, and was unwilling to hazard his life by returning into the midst of his bitter enemies." As a Roman citizen, he demanded Roman justice. In his refusal, we notice. (b) His consciousness of moral rectitude. "To the

Jews I have done no wrong, as thou very well knowest." Festus, no doubt, knew that Paul had been tried by Felix, and that no fault was found then; as a shrewd man, he must have seen that the spirit of his accusers was a spirit capable of fabricating the most groundless and malignant charges, and he must have learnt from the language, the spirit, and the learning of the apostle, that he was an innocent man. Paul had very good reason for saying, "Thou very well knowest." His keen eye penetrated into the heart of the judge, and read there the sentence—"This man is not guilty." In his refusal, we notice—(c) His sublime heroism of soul. He dared death. Was he afraid of death? Not he. "For if I be an offender, or have committed anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die." To a truly great man, truth, virtue, justice, honour, are far more precious things than mortal life. Men's dread of death is always in proportion to their disregard to moral principles. He dared his judge too. "If there be none of these things whereof these accuse me, no man may deliver me unto them." As if he had said to Festus, "You dare deliver me to the Jews." The right to appeal to Cæsar belonged to him as a Roman citizen, and it was strictly forbidden by the Lex Julien to put any obstruction in the way of a Roman citizen when he had appealed. Paul knew this, and he dared his judge, by appealing to Cæsar—"Cæsar I invoke."

III. THE RESULTANT CIRCUMSTANCES CONNECTED WITH PAUL'S APPEARANCE BEFORE FESTUS. "Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council, answered, Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? unto Cæsar shalt thou go." The immediate result is, Paul is delivered from the power of the Jews, remanded into custody until an opportunity occurred of sending him into the imperial city. He was now destined for Rome. In this, "*Unto Cæsar shalt thou go*," we may see the triumph of three things—

First: *The triumph of justice over policy.* Festus, in desiring him to go to Jerusalem to be tried, thought it a

stroke of policy, but Paul's appeal to Cæsar forced him to abandon the purpose. "The right of appeal," says Alexander to the people, "in a body, or as represented by the tribunes, was one of the most valued rights of Roman citizens, and still continued to be so regarded even after the supreme judicial power of the people had been transferred to the emperors. Particular importance was attached to the right of appeal from the judgments of provincial magistrates. According to ancient writers, no delay or written form was requisite, the only act necessary to arrest the judgment being the utterance of the word *Appello*! The magic power of this one word is described as similar to the talismanic phrase, *Civis Romanus sum*! Indeed, the two things coincided, as it was the Roman citizen, and not the mere provincial subject of the empire, who could thus transfer his cause from any inferior tribunal to that of the Emperor himself. The possession of this citizenship, therefore, was the providential means of saving Paul at this critical juncture, not only from the power of his Jewish foes, but also from the weaknesses of his Roman friends." In this, "*Unto Cæsar shalt thou go*," we see—

Secondly: *The triumph of generosity over selfishness.* A divine generosity—a generosity inspired by the Gospel of Christ—had awakened in the heart of Paul a strong desire to go to Rome, in order to unfurl the banner of universal philanthropy in the metropolis of the world. "Paul purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there I must also see Rome." (Acts xix. 21.) And in his letter to the Romans he says, "I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift." (Romans i. 11.) And again, "Having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you, whensoever I take my journey into Spain I will come unto you; for I trust to see you in my journey." (Rom. xv. 23, 24.) This he wrote many years before, when he was at Corinth; so that this generous desire to preach in Rome was

one strengthened by years. But how had *selfishness*, working in the Jews especially, wrought earnestly in a thousand ways to thwart these Heaven-born purposes of generosity. Here, however, in "unto Cæsar shalt thou go" is a triumph of his purpose. His way to Rome is made safe and sure—"To Cæsar shalt thou go." The door of Rome is thrown open to him. This incident I take as a cheering prophecy that the generous one day shall achieve the mastery of the world. In this, "unto Cæsar shalt thou go," we see—

Thirdly : *The triumph of the divine over the human.* God had purposed that Paul should go to Rome. "And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul ; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." (Acts xxiii. 11.) The purpose of the Jews was to kill him at Jerusalem, and had Festus acceded to their demands, Paul would never have seen Rome. But the Lord reigns, and so controls the opposing and conflicting passions of the world, as ultimately to realize his own decree. God's revealed purposes may often seem to us most unlikely of fulfilment ; sometimes, indeed, all but frustrated ; yet they march forward to a grand consummation. As we believe, amid the darkness and desolations of the severest winter, that summer is on its march, and will cover the world with life and beauty, so let us believe, amongst all the workings of human depravity, that God's great purpose to redeem the world to holiness and bliss is marching on in stately certainty.

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OPERATIONS OF GUILT.

"How guilt, once harboured in the conscious breast,
Intimidates the brave, degrades the great!"—JOHNSON.

PRESENCE OF GUILT.

"Who has a heart so pure,
But some uncleanly apprehensions
Keep leets, and law days, and in session sit
With meditations awful?" SHAKESPEARE.

Homiletic Notes on the Epistle of James.

(No. IX.)

SUBJECT: *Respect of Persons.*

"My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons," &c.—Jas. ii. 1—9.*

THE word here rendered "with respect of persons," *ἐν προσωποληψίαις*, signifies "the accepting of one's face or outside," and so the injunction is one against honouring men out of consideration to any external advantage they may possess. James entreats his fellow Christians not to combine the irreligious profession with respect for any adventitious superiority. His reasons are because it is—

I. ANTICHRISTIAN. Honour paid to men in religious affairs because of any external advantage is antagonistic to the entire genius of the religion of Jesus Christ. For (1) Christianity regards man as man, its provisions and adaptations are not for a race or a class, but universal. The Lord of Glory, its Founder, was the "Son of Man," and "tasted death for every man." (2) In Christ's earthly life,—*e.g.* His converse, his miracles, his sympathy, there was assuredly none of this respect of persons. Even his enemies confessed to Him, "Thou carest for no man, and regardest the person of no man, but teachest the word of God in truth." (3) Paul caught his Divine Master's spirit, for he said, "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh."

II. UNGODLIKE. James calls us to hear how God treats the different classes of men. He is no "respector of persons." (1) Upon whom in *the olden time* did He put the highest religious honours? Moses, David, Elisha, {Amos: Verily the slave child, the shepherd boy, the ploughman, the herdsman, were the "poor of this world." (2) Upon whom *is the*

* For another exposition of this passage, see HOMILIST, third series, vol. viii. page 346.

early Christian era did he put the highest religious honours? Fishermen and taxgatherers, "the poor of this world." (3) Upon whom in *modern Christian times* has He bestowed grace to win the laurels of religious victories and wear the crowns of religious fame? The ready answer from the history of church revivals, and missionary enterprise is, "the poor of this world." Augustine, Luther, Carey, Bunyan, Whitefield, &c., illustrate the fact that "God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, &c." The argument of James then, is, in this matter, "Be ye followers of God."

III. INEXPEDIENT. In verses 6 and 7, proofs are adduced of the fact that when Christians combine this "respect of persons" with religious profession, they do what is most inconsistent with their own interests. For, "in respecting of persons," you (1) *Encourage oppression*. "Do not rich men, &c." It is more historic than experimental with us, that as a class, the rich men persecuted and crushed Christians who were generally of lowly station. By honouring men merely for their wealth, their power to be thus social tyrants was augmented; moreover, by such respect of persons, you (2) *Encourage blasphemies*. The rich Pagans and Jews of that day hurled scorn and heaped contempt upon the name of Jesus. And now, too often, the rich, by selfish luxury and pride, and materialism, blaspheme sacrifice, lowliness, spirit. And is not Christ these? By according your honour to the merely rich you increase the prestige of blasphemies.

IV. IMMORAL. Respect of persons is a violation of "the royal law." Love is the royal law, the king among the laws, for all other laws derive their authority from love, and all yield to it.

When we have said that James teaches that this respect of persons is thus Antichristian, ungodlike, inexpedient, immoral, we have used what philosophically are *convertible* terms. Our meditation has only been an observation of the same fact from different sides, for that which is Antichristian must, by necessity, be ungodlike, inexpedient, and immoral.

(No. X.)

SUBJECT : *The Law of Philanthropy.*

"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," &c.—Jas. ii. 10—13.

THE writer of the epistle is showing that "respect of persons" is an infraction of the Royal law, and his argument leads him to notice several things about this law of love—this philanthropy.

I. IT IS THE SUBSTANCE OF ALL LAW. Love is so essentially the basis of moral law, that it is impossible to violate love without being an infringer of the whole law. Law is a chain that is dissolved by the loosening of one link. Hence it matters not what wrongs love, for that wronging is the loosening of the link. All selfishness is antagonism to love, and every selfish act, or habit, such as this "respect of persons," is a rebellion against the whole law.

II. IT IS INCONSISTENT WITH ALL SOCIAL WRONGS. Two of the greatest social wrongs are here quoted as instances of all others. The law of love is utterly incompatible with any and each of them. (1) *Because the genius of the law is dishonoured by any violation.* There is a solidarity about this law that does not admit of its being broken in one part, and yet kept in the whole. In its every point it expresses the same spirit, and so at the point that is disobeyed, the common spirit of the whole is dishonoured. (2) *Because the Author of the law is disobeyed by any violation of it.* God is the Author of every detail of the law, and so is disobeyed by any neglect of it.

III. IT IS THE SPIRIT OF TRUE LIBERTY. The law of love has not to do with points, but with the governing motive, the ruling spirit of the life. Any obedience to any number of special duties does not rank a man among those who are loyal to this law. He has to concern himself not with minute directions but with the master passion of his life. Where there is selfishness, there may be license; where there is love, there is liberty. Thus the royal law is "the law of liberty."

IV. THE DETERMINER OF OUR CONDITION. By our loyalty to this law, our possession of this love, we prove that we are in the kingdom of mercy. The condition of those who obey this law is to be earnestly desired, (1), "*Because it is the merciful will obtain mercy.*" "He that sheweth judgment," &c. (2) *Because mercy is in itself most blessed.* Mercy, in God and in man, glories over justice. The stern, the rigorous, the terrible, will melt before the tender, the sacrificial, the gentle.

Bristol.

U. R. THOMAS.

Germ of Thought.

SUBJECT : *Christ's Relation to the Great Father.*

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—John i. 18.

Analysis of Homily the Seven Hundred and Fifty-Ninth.

THE first three Gospels were called, by some of the Fathers, *corporeal* Gospels, because they dated the life of Christ from Abraham and from Adam. This Gospel may be justly called the *spiritual* Gospel, because it dates the life of Christ back to "the beginning." These first eighteen introductory verses of this Gospel enshrine the sublimest views of the Son of God. The text is almost an epitome of the whole, and it leads us to look at Christ in relation to the Infinite Father.

I. HE IS THE NEAREST RELATION TO THE GREAT FATHER. He is the "*only* begotten Son." This phrase occurs in three other places in John's writings. (John i. 14; iii. 16 and 18; 1 John iv. 9.) That the language implies an essential relation to the ABSOLUTE perfectly *unique*, is obvious from two considerations. First : *The interpretation which the Jews attached to it.* "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but, said

also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." (John v. 18.) Secondly : *The most extraordinary manifestation of Divine love which the sacred writers saw in his mission.* "He that spared not his own Son." "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son," &c. "Herein is love," &c.

Several things connected with his history as recorded by the evangelists, show that He did sustain this essential and *unique* relation to the Great Father. (1) His miraculous conception. "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee : therefore, also, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (2) His entire history, his whole life agrees with the wonderful account of his supernatural conception, and shows that He was the "Son of God" in a sense in which no other man was. His teaching everywhere assumes and asserts it. He speaks of himself as the "bread which came down from heaven," and declares over and over again his *oneness* with the Father. His miracles attest it. He wrought works that no other man had ever wrought, and no other man could ever perform. The phenomena, too, connected with his death, his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension into heaven, all go to the same demonstration. The Great Father has many children. All souls human and angelic are his children, but this is his *only* begotten Son.

II. HE IS THE TENDEREST IN AFFECTION TO THE GREAT FATHER. "He is in the *bosom* of the Father." He is not only the nearest in *essence* as the only begotten Son, but the nearest in *affection* "in the bosom of the Father." With men the only begotten Son may not have the closest relation with the Father's heart. In many places Christ is represented as the most endeared object of the Divine affection. The Son of God, speaking of the existence He had before all time, and all worlds, says, "I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him," and of Him, the Great Father said, in

distant ages, "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth." When Christ was inaugurated to his public ministry, a voice from the Father's heart was heard, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The same also after his transfiguration. Peter says, "He received from God the Father, honour and glory, when there came to him such a voice from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Paul calls Christ God's "*dear Son*." From this we learn. First: *That God loves*. He is not mere Infinite Intellectuality. He is Infinite Sensibility too. He has a heart. Secondly: *Christ is the highest object of his love*. What love is that? Who knows? It is not the love of pity, not the love of gratitude, it is the love of infinite complacency.

III. HE IS THE MOST ACCURATE IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE GREAT FATHER. "No man hath seen God at any time." God is essentially *invisible* to creatures. "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, or can see, to whom be glory and power everlasting." In Old Testament times we read of some personal manifestations of God that were seen, but not the Absolute Deity. Christ alone hath seen God. First: *He alone is intellectually qualified to know God*. Christ's intellect is vast enough to comprehend the Absolute Jehovah. The highest created spirit only knows God in some of his aspects. Christ knows Him in all, knows Him in his being. Secondly: *He alone is morally qualified to know God*. He alone is sufficiently *pure* in heart, and the pure in heart only can see God. He alone is sufficiently *powerful*. Moses, Isaiah, John, could not stand a slight manifestation of God, much less could they stand the full vision. There is but one being in the universe who knows God thoroughly, and that is Christ.

IV. HE IS THE MOST COMPLETE IN THE REVELATION OF THE GREAT FATHER. "He hath declared him." "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man

the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matt. xi. 27.) He is the Logos, the only word which can express the divine heart. "He is the image of the invisible God, the express image of his person." What is the revelation which Christ has given of the Father? It refers especially to two things. First: *To his Being*. He is a *spirit* Almighty, Allwise, All-present, Invisible. Secondly: *To his relation*. A Father—a governing, compassionating, forgiving Father, feeling for humanity as the father of the prodigal felt for his lost son. If Christ is the correct revelation of God, observe (1), That all other revelations of God must be tested by his. As neither Moses, David, nor the prophets saw Him as Christ saw Him, we must judge of their statements concerning Him by Christ's. We must interpret the Old Testament by the New, not the New by the Old. Observe (2), That much that is prevalent in religious society must be repudiated as un-Christlike—much in the opinions, in the spirit and institutions of churches that are repugnant to the teachings of Christ. Observe (3), That Christ must be held as the only moral master of souls, since He alone hath seen God, and can fully reveal Him. We must call no man master—no bishops, archbishops, or popes—no, not even Moses and the prophets. One is your Master, even Christ.



SUBJECT: *Eternal Life a Gift.*

"This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son."—1 John v. 11.

Analysis of *Homily the Seven Hundred and Sixtieth.*

THE man of wealth on his death-bed will gladly part with it all for "an inch of time."

The criminal whose soul has not been seared into incorrigibleness takes back his forfeited life from the hand of a gracious sovereign with a heart-bounding ecstasy. And so the man who realizes himself an immortal, under the condemning

power of a broken law, shut up to the judgment to come, will read the "*record*," as his title to an heirship vast of blessing, to which all men are made welcome "through faith that is in Christ Jesus."

I. THE SUBJECT OF THE "RECORD"—"ETERNAL LIFE." What is it? *It is not endless existence.* The soul may or may not possess "natural immortality." The "record" refers not to this point. The Bible assumes man's immortality, and on this fulcrum rests its levers, and brings its moral influences to bear for the elevation of human conscience. It is not endless existence *even in heaven* that is the subject of the "record." No arrangement of mere external circumstances can bestow this life, or any life, in its truest, highest sense. Every man can test this by an appeal to his own experience: the land may "flow with milk and honey" and yet the same may be cursed with a chronic discontent which transmutes every blessing into bane. The soil may be parched wilderness—a scorched highway of hardship—on which not even a tuft of moss may grow, but the spirit, "looking at the things which are not seen," can rejoice in hope and sing amid the waste, "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but," &c. The gravitating forces of wrong will act upon the wrong-doer everywhere, and draw him from the highest heaven and plunge him in the deepest hell. "*Eternal life*" consists in the *soul's well-being*—its intrinsic, internal blessedness: "the kingdom of God is within you." He has not mastered the alphabet of truth who does not know this—that feeble, morbid religiousness, which craves a nursery in conventional hotbeds of grace, whose piety depends on place and devotion on the delights of an hour, may be "ever learning," but is not likely "to come to the knowledge of the truth," that happiness depends on our inward conformity to the right much more, every way more, than in any possible arrangement of the outward; that a moral assimilation to the "truth as it is in Jesus," and not sentimental longings after devotional "frames and feelings,"

- mark the new creature ; that within us are the embers of a fire that shall never be quenched, or the seeds of love which shall wave in a harvest joy. It consists in the reign of law and love, even the springs of the heart, "the kingdom *fixed* within." *This life is "eternal."* It is drawn from the Eternal One ; his principles of rectitude imbedded in the heart and "springing up into everlasting life." Not mere extended existence, but an indestructible good, built upon continued life in a father's presence. Our tiny "annuals," dignified by such names as "principles," "religion," "happiness," not always of a heavenly Father's planting, must wither.

"Our little systems have their day ;
They have their day and cease to be."

When in seeing Christ, we see the Father also ; when the heart beats a responsive throb of gratitude to Him who has loved us ; when starting into a new-found life, we say with honest, intelligent purpose, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do." Then this "eternal life" has surely dawned upon us. *Is it a "life?"* Not lazy existence amid "peaceful plains," and "living fountains." It would almost appear from the songs and sentiments cherished by some good souls, that they would dread a life in heaven, if accompanied by earnest, restless effort to serve God in the temple of the universe. True, there is rest for the weary, a "keeping a Sabbath for the people of God." And yet the denizens of that better land—the possessors of this "eternal life"—"rest not day nor night." All life must manifest itself ; it will burst every cold shell or wrappage in any clime, and assert its unconquerable vitality, and nowhere so grand as under the congenial skies of that "upper world."

II. THE DOCTRINE OF THE RECORD, "GOD HATH GIVEN TO US ETERNAL LIFE, AND THIS IS IN HIS SON." First: *It is a gift.* Not something for which men need to toil, but something to be simply received. The gift of a Saviour, of a full and accepted atonement, of an "everlasting righteousness,"

the free love of the giver, the good wish of a "God reconciling the world unto Himself." Secondly: *It is a gift already given.* "God hath given," &c. The believer has its foretaste; it stirs within his soul; but to the ear of the unbeliever the same glad evangel comes; the sound that has gone out to the ends of the world, greets him, "Return unto me; wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, my Father?" &c. The gift in *itself* is *unconditionally* given; we may receive it, and be enriched for ever, or reject it thanklessly; but the fact remains unchanged and unchangeable, "God hath given to us eternal life." Men are pauperized for ever because they *reject* the true riches—the blessings which are "without money and without price." Thirdly: *It is a gift already given "in his Son."* Not in systems, priests, churches; "grace and truth" come by Jesus Christ. The sinful and saved must take the same look, must apprehend the same truth, take possession of the same God-given gift, and Fourthly: This is for "*record.*" It is testified, that men may know it on God's authority and live. "This is eternal life, to know thee the only true God;" "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." God Himself becomes witness to the saving truth. CURRIE.



SUBJECT: *The Glorious Issues of Christian Fidelity.*

"And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."—Luke x. 17—20.

Analysis of *Genesis* the Seven Hundred and Sixty-First.

SOME authorities maintain that these incidents occurred within a few days of the sending forth of the seventy. Hence the wonder was the greater. To achieve such results

in so short a time added to the disciples' joy. It is marvelous that electricity should convey messages for thousands of miles, but our admiration is increased by the *rapidity* of the telegraph. Every year Jesus heals the sick and multiplies loaves, but when on earth He did this instantaneously.

I. CHRISTIAN FIDELITY ACHIEVES GLORIOUS RESULTS. The seventy had been faithful to their trust, and hence "even the devils" were "subject unto" them.

First: *Christian fidelity achieves what others have failed to do.* The apostles had tried to cast out an evil spirit, but could not. (Luke ix. 40.) So now, Christ's followers do what others were unable to do. The spirit of *ignorance* is cast out. "The world by wisdom knew not God." Athens built an altar "to the unknown God." Christ reveals the Father to those who learn of Him, so that they can say, "I know whom I have believed." The spirit of *discontent* is cast out. "The eye" of man in his natural state "is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing"; but the apostle declares, "I have learned in whatsoever state," &c. The spirit of *selfishness* is cast out. "All seek their own;" but "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren."

Secondly: *Christian fidelity accomplishes more than it expected.* "Even the devils." The main source of the disciples' joy is to be found in the word "even." Christ had not promised them power to exorcise; He said nothing about it when He sent them forth. Their success, therefore, was beyond their anticipations. How often men do more good than they ever expected? Did Abraham, Jacob, David, Mary, or Dorcas imagine that their examples would be such powers for good in every age and land? Robert Raikes set in motion a series of moral forces the value of which none could foresee. "More than we ask or think," is often the reward of obedience.

II. THESE RESULTS ARE MARKED BY CHRIST. "I beheld Satan fall." That is, according to some, "I saw in your

works the defeat of the arch-enemy. You tell me about it, but I saw it." Note, in passing, the force and poetry of our Lord's allusion to Satan as lightning falling from heaven. Three ideas are suggested. *Beauty*. As the lightning has an awful grandeur, so in the devil there are great intellectual resources. He is a being of magnificent though malignant mind. Moreover, beauty is not seldom associated with evil : *physical* beauty, Absalom ; *mental* beauty, many books, Shelley and Byron ; *social* beauty, the filial affection of him who said, "Let me first go and bury my father." *Balefulness* is suggested. The lightning rips up the oak, fires houses, kills men. Satan destroys bodies and souls. *Brevity* is suggested. "Quick as lightning," we say. So, thank God ! compared with the eternal victories of Christ, the devil's reign will be short.

Whenever we labour for Him, the Saviour sees us. The seeking spirit of Zaccheus, the devout soul of Nathanael, the patient toils of Peter on the lake, teach the *personal* notice of Jesus. "I know thy works." He walks amid the "seven candlesticks." He rejoices, too, when we are successful. "Jesus rejoiced in spirit." (Verse 21.)

III. CHRISTIAN FIDELITY IS EXPOSED TO DANGER. Perhaps the seventy thought too much of the part which they had in what had been done. Though they said, "through thy name," they prefaced it by the words, "unto us." Christ probably saw this. At any rate He knew the temptation that lies before successful labourers to indulge pride and egotism. Possibly he alluded to this in the eighteenth verse. "Beware of pride. Let me tell you what I have witnessed. I saw Satan, a being who had as much power and privilege as you, fall from heaven. Why was he excluded ? For pride and self-seeking. Be this a warning to you." It is worthy of note that the disciples made no reference to the *moral* aspect of their mission. Not a syllable did they utter touching their preaching and its reception. Therefore our Lord said, "Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not," &c. The

spiritual is more than the supernatural ; graces better than gifts.

First: *Gifts are no sign of divine favour ; virtues are.* Wealth, influence, talent do not prove their possessors to be objects of God's approbation. Balaam prophesied. To those who "cast out devils," Christ will say, "I never knew," *i.e.*, approved, "you." Not so graces. "The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear him."

Luton.

STEVENSON.

SUBJECT : *The Truth Seeker.*

"There was a certain man in Cæsarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. He saw in a vision evidently, about the ninth hour of the day, an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before God. And now send men to Joppa, and call for one Simon, whose surname is Peter: he lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea-side: he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do."—Acts x. 1—6.

Analysis of Family the Seven Hundred and Sixty-Second.

I. THE CHARACTER OF THIS TRUTH-SEEKER. He was a soldier—centurion, commander of a hundred men—a heathen Roman ; his moral character devout, feared God, gave much alms, and prayed always ; "his prayers had been accepted," &c. This solves a deep question, how will the heathen be treated by God, who never had the Gospel? Answer—men will be judged by the light they have. This man acted up to the light of nature, and was accepted, showing that he would have received the light of Christianity. This no encouragement to the moralist. (1) This man acted up to the light he had. The moralist does not. (2) The morality and good works of the centurion, only the outward proof of his devoutness. Not so with moralist, &c. (3) This man did not depend upon his good works, &c., as a ground, but sought

something better, &c. (4) This man embraced Christ when revealed to him, &c. (5) This man impressed others with his own devoutness—family, soldiers, society, &c.

II. THE HEAVENLY INTEREST IN THIS TRUTH-SEEKER. This shown by angels. We know their interest in men, that it is purely spiritual—their practical active part in the work of human recovery. This seen in their minute acquaintance with our circumstances. Call Cornelius by name—named Peter—the town—house—situation, near the sea—occupant, Simon—his trade, tanner, &c. This interest seen in the repentance and return of a prodigal, in every stage of the spiritual progress, &c. Thus, angels feel deepest interest in the truth-seeker; hence, we should feel the same.

III. THE HUMAN GUIDE OF THIS TRUTH-SEEKER. An angel here visited Cornelius, told him what to do, where to send, the man to send for. Why did not he do Peter's part as instructor? He knew the Gospel as well as Peter and better. He felt as much interest in it as Peter, &c. Why was He not employed to do so? (1) This is God's plan. Man employed to prophesy, to give divine news, to be the vehicle of Christ's divine manifestation. (2) Salvation is a practical work. We need the living illustration of a human life. (3) It is an experimental one we need, not only a teacher but a *witness*. One who can verify it from his own experience. (4) It redounds more to the glory of God and of Christianity. The greatness of the result is seen in the weakness of the instrumentality. (5) Establishes an independence and close unity amongst men. An important fact. The most important work reserved for men.

IV. THE OBSTACLES REMOVED FOR THIS TRUTH-SEEKER. There were great barriers removed. The Gentile separated by high barriers. No communion. Unlawful for Peter to visit Cornelius. The barrier. The vision of Peter. The sheet with various living creatures, &c. Peter's scruple and

reply. The men of Cornelius at the porch and their message. The truth taught and obstacles removed. Enquirer, truth-seeker, you have *no barrier now*. All barriers are removed. The way is free and special encouragement is given, &c.

V. PETER'S SYMPATHY WITH THE TRUTH-SEEKER. Peter in anxious doubt. The will of God made clear. Lodges the men. Pursues his long journey. Reaches Cæsarea on fourth day. Address to Cornelius. All scruples and prejudices overcome. No hesitancy to follow the divine leading. The happy result. The truth-seeker led into full light. Receives the messenger and his word. He and family baptized, &c. Joppa: Jonah and Peter went to Gentiles.

J. G. H.

Thinkings by a Broad-Bibleman.

(No. VII.)

SUBJECT: *God's Half-Bible.*

TO THE EDITOR OF THE "HOMILIST."

DEAR SIR,—I am, like yourself, an advocate for free inquiry, but not for dogmatic infidelity. I was, therefore, not a little pained to read in the July number of the *HOMILIST*, p. 56, "Without doubt, a large portion of the Bible has been lost."

Were I to adopt the same spirit of dogmatism, I should deny this *in toto* without assigning any reason. But in order to satisfy others, let me show why I hold the remarks of your correspondent to be—

I. UNREASONABLE. Admitting the necessity of a Revelation, is it consistent with reason to suppose that God would allow "a large portion" of it to be lost? Is it, moreover, reasonable to suppose that the same wisdom which dictated the sentiment, "If I bear witness of myself, my record is not true," would cite Scripture in confirmation of Scripture, as

must have been the case if the writings enumerated by "Replicant" formed at any time a portion of the Canonical Books?

II. UNSCRIPTURAL. *All* Scripture is given by inspiration of God. Not one jot or one tittle of his Word shall fail. "Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away!" Curses are denounced against those who add to it or take away from it.

III. UNSUPPORTED BY FACTS. There is not the remotest reason for believing that any one of the books referred to by "Replicant" ever formed part of the Bible in any sense but that in which all *extraneous* evidence forms part of it. The logical inference looks entirely in the opposite direction. The *dictum* of your correspondent may, in fact, be reduced to this absurdity, "All that is *not* in the Bible is necessarily and undeniably part of the Bible."

Hume's "History of England" would remain intact, if Ingulphus, Asser, the Saxon Chronicle, Bede, Henry of Huntingdon, and all the authorities quoted by him, had perished. So the Bible remains not the less complete and perfect because other writings incidentally referred to in it have been long lost. As regards the latter, these books cannot be said to be quoted, much less sanctioned, by the sacred writers, so that our argument acquires force by the comparison. Were I disposed to be as sceptical as "Replicant," I could have made a much stronger case than he has done, by showing that other writings are actually *quoted*, and sometimes *with decided approval*, by the inspired penmen, which even he would allow never formed any portion of Scripture. Let him add, if he please, to his list of sacred books lost, mislaid, mutilated, or dropped out of the Canon:—

1. *The Poems of Aratus the Cilician*, in which occur the words, "For we, His offspring are," quoted approvingly in Acts xvii. 23.

2. *The Hymn of Cleanthes to Jupiter*, containing a similar passage.

3. *The Code of Epicurus*, the core of which is evidently referred to by Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 32.

4. *The complete works of Menander*, whose axiom, "Good manners are debauched by talk profane," is actually paraphrased in the next verse.

5. The writings of that *Cretian Satirist* who described his countrymen as "always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies." As Paul (Tit. i. 12) calls him a "prophet," there can be no doubt that the loss of his writings must be as fatal to the integrity of Scripture as those of "Gad the seer."

6. *The Dialogue between Michael the archangel and the Devil*, in which are found those memorable words—"The Lord rebuke thee." (Jude 9.)

Let me not be charged with irreverence in thus approaching a subject fraught with such momentous issues; but statements so shallow, and put in such an unguarded manner, as those of "Replicant," admit of no better answer than the *reductio ad absurdum*. STET.

Biblical Criticism.

By Rev. CHARLES WILLS, M.A.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.—EMENDATIVE RENDERINGS.

Chap. xxv. 1.—And Festus *having* come into the province, after three days *went up* to Jerusalem from Cæsarea. 2. And the high *priests* and the chief of the Jews, &c. 3. *Asking* favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, *making an ambuscade* to kill him in the way. 5. Let them then among you, he *says*, that are able, go down with me, and if there is any [*fault*] in this man [*αὐτοῦ*] accuse him. 7. against him, &c. 8. *Paul* answering: Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple [*ἱερὸν*], nor against Cæsar, have I *sinned* at all. 10. And Paul said, At the tribunal of Cæsar am I *standing*, where I ought to be judged, &c. 11. If *now then* I am a *wrong-doer*, and have *done* anything worthy of death, I *deprecate* not to die: . . . no man can *grant* me to them. I *invoke* Cæsar. 12. Then Festus, *having spoken* with the Council, answered, Cæsar thou hast *invoked*, to Cæsar thou shalt go. 14. There is a certain man [*Ανὴρ τῆς*], &c. 16. To whom I answered, that

it is not the *custom with the Romans to grant* any man [*αὐθις*], before that the accused have the accusers face to face, and *take opportunity* of answer concerning the charge. 17. When *then* they were come *together* hither, *making no delay*, on the morrow *sitting on the tribunal*, I commanded the man [*αὐδα*] to be brought. 19. But had against him certain questions of their own *religion*, &c. 20. And I [*emphatic*] *being at a loss with regard to questioning* concerning these things, asked, &c. 21. But Paul *having invoked* that he be kept to the *knowledge* of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him *up* to Cæsar. 22. Then Agrippa [*said*] unto Festus; To-morrow, saith he, thou shalt hear him. 23. With *much shew*, and *they were* entered into the place of *audience*, with both *præfects* and men [*αὐδασι*] that were prominent in the city, &c. 24. all men [*αὐδες*] who are present with us, ye *behold* this [man], concerning whom the whole multitude of the Jews *lighted* on me, both in Jerusalem and here, *crying out*, &c. 25. But I [*emphatic*] *comprehending*, &c. and the man himself *having invoked* Augustus, I judged [it right] to send him, 26. that the examination *being made*, I might have something that I *might write*. 27. . . . to signify the *complaints* against him.

Chap. xxvi. 1.— *It is permitted thee to speak concerning thyself*. 3. Especially *since thou art knowing* in all both customs and questions that are among the Jews, &c. 4. . . . which was *from the beginning* among my nation and in Jerusalem, &c. 5. Knowing me *before* from the first, if they *will bear witness*, that after the most *punctilious* sect of our religion [*ᾠρησκείας*] I lived a Pharisee. 6. on account of the hope, &c. 7. Unto which our *body* of twelve tribes, with *intentness* night and day serving, *hopeth* to come: concerning which hope I am accused by Jews, O King. 8. Why is it *judged* a thing *not of the faith* with you *whether* God raiseth the dead? 9. I [*emphatic*] *indeed then* thought with myself that *it was binding* to do many [things] *adverse* to the name of Jesus the Nazarene. 10. And both

many of the saints I [emphatic] shut up in prison, *taking the authority from the chief priests*; and when they were *slain I assented by vote*. 11. And *through all the synagogues often punishing them, I compelled them to blaspheme, &c.* 12. *In this business also going to Damascus with authority, and the commission from the chief priests,* 14. . . . in the Hebrew language, &c. 15. But I [emphatic] said, &c. 16. . . . for this I appeared to thee, to make thee a minister and witness both of the things which thou *seest*, and of those about which I will appear to thee. 17, *Taking thee out from the people and the Gentiles, to whom I [emphatic] send thee.* 18. To open their eyes, to turn, &c. 20. But announced *both first to them in Damascus, and in Jerusalem, also in all the country of Judea, and to the Gentiles, &c.* 21. . . *seizing me in the temple [ἱερῶ] essayed to kill [me].* 22. Having then obtained *the help that is from God, I stand* until this day, &c. 23. That *the Christ as a sufferer, the first of the resurrection of the dead, should shew light both to the people and the Gentiles.* 24. *While he was answering these things, Festus says with a loud voice, Paul, thou art mad, much literature turns thee to madness.* 25. But he says, I am not mad, most excellent Festus, &c. 26. For the king *understandeth concerning these things, to whom also I speak with freedom*; for I am persuaded *nothing at all* of these things, &c. 28. . . . *In a little thou persuadest me to become a Christian.* 29. But Paul [said], *Would to God, both in little and in great, that not only thou, but also all that are hearing me to-day, would become such as I am, except these bonds.* 30. *Both the king arose and the governor, &c.* 31. And *having withdrawn, they spoke to each other, saying, &c.* 32. And Agrippa said to Festus, This man [ἀνθρωπος] *could have been let go, if he had not invoked Cæsar.*

EXCESS OF GUILT.

"Thoughts cannot form themselves in words so horrid
As to express my guilt."DRYDEN.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

CHRIST'S MISSION.

"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."—Mark ii. 17.

THIS is Christ's own announcement of his own mission. It is brief, clear, comprehensive, gloriously significant. It is the Gospel epitomised. It is not the language of a sanguine enthusiast, whose wishes at the outset of an enterprise transcend his capacities of action—one whose heart yearned to accomplish that which he lacked either the courage, or capability, or both, to undertake. Christ translates his wishes into actions. His whole history is a fulfilment of the announcement. He set Himself to work at the very outset of his public ministry, amongst the worst and the most degraded of "sinners." So habitually was He amongst them, that he was called the "friend of publicans and sinners." Even corrupt women, whom society had cast off, He set Himself to reform. Witness the woman in the house of the Pharisee, and the woman taken in adultery. And ever since his ascension to heaven, amongst the chief of sinners, He has been working through the agency

of his disciples. The men, for example, saved at Corinth, were "fornicators," "idolaters," "adulterers," "effeminate" "abusers of themselves with mankind," "thieves," "revilers," "drunkards," "extortioners." (1 Cor. vi. 9—11.) I offer two remarks concerning his mission thus announced.

I. IT IS ENTIRELY ORIGINAL. Had ever anyone appeared upon the earth before who manifested a special practical interest in sinners, and in sinners of the lowest type? No, the universal feeling through the ages was either to shun or to destroy sinners. Even David, who may be regarded as one of the divinest men of ancient times, had but little mercy for sinners. His frequent prayer was, "Let the sinner be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more." First: *Its originality indicates his divinity.* The idea of his mission was not to be found in human history, in human literature, or anywhere in human society; it was foreign to everything that was human. The idea was God's, and he who embodied it was God's own messenger. Secondly: *Its originality explains to*

some extent the opposition he met with when on earth. The world has ever been frightened at the new in thought and enterprise. The apostle of a new idea has ever been a hideous heretic, from which men have recoiled with savage animosity. Christ had ideas about men that were not shared by any—were in contrast to those of all, and hence, though He came unto his own, his own received him not; they were afraid of Him. The generation amongst whom he lived and laboured, inspired with fear and hate, exclaimed, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

II. IT IS TRANSCENDENTLY IMPORTANT. There is no work in the world, probably in the universe, comparable to this. The discoveries of science, the enactments of law, the productions of literature, the works of art, these, in their highest forms of excellence are but child's play compared to the work of "calling sinners to repentance." First: *It is the most urgent work in the world.* "Repentance" means moral reformation. Reformation, involving a new spirit of life, as well as a new plan of action, is that one work to help the world, without which all other work is useless. Social, ecclesiastical, parliamentary, political, reforms,

are all worthless, without moral reformation. Moral reformation is essential to man's salvation individually and corporeally. Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Secondly: *It is the most influential work in the world.* (1) Essentially it is the most influential. The moral reformer wins the love, the heart, the whole self of the reformed. As Christ brings men to repentance, He builds up an empire on the strongest affections of the human soul. (2) Numerically it is the most influential. Sinners are the majority of all ages; nay, all men are sinners. He therefore whose mission it is to effect a change in the hearts of sinners must exert the *widest* as well as the *deepest* influence upon the world. Throughout the whole moral empire of God no work is so influential as that of calling sinners to repentance. Even the repentance of one thrills all heaven. "There is more joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance."

CONCLUSION.—What a glorious mission is that of Christ. To use the language of an eminent modern author—"By going to the lowest stratum of human nature, Christ gave a new idea of the

value of man. He built a kingdom out of the refuse of society. To compare small things with great, it has been pointed out by Lord Macaulay, that in an English cathedral there is an exquisite stained window which was made by an apprentice out of the pieces of glass which had been rejected by his master, and it was so far superior to every other in the church, that, according to tradition, the envious artist killed himself with vexation. All the builders of society had rejected the 'sinners' and made the painted window of the 'righteous.' A new builder came; his plan was original, startling, revolutionary; his eye was upon the condemned material. He made the first last, and the last first, and the stone which the builders rejected, he made the head-stone of the corner. He always specially cared for the rejected stone. Men had always cared for the great, the beautiful, the righteous; it was left to Christ to care for sinners."

THE BUSINESS OF LIFE.

"That ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business."—1 Thess. iv. 11.

LIFE is a business. Every man has a mission, a purpose to work out, for which he has

been sent into the world. Man is organised for activity, and the circumstances in which he is placed necessitate work. The text suggests three things concerning the true business of life.

I. It is to be PERSONAL. "Do your *own* business." By this it is not meant that we are to be regardless of others in our labour, and aim only at self-gratification and aggrandisement, but that we have a sphere of labour *entirely* our own, which sphere of labour we are bound to fill. That each man has a department of labour peculiar to himself is clear from four considerations. (1) The peculiarity of each man's external circumstances. No man has exactly the same surroundings as another. He has relations all his own. (2) The peculiarity of each man's personal needs. Every man has some exigencies special to himself. (3) The peculiarity of each man's individual aptitudes. Every man has not only an opportunity, but a power, for doing something which no other man can do so well. (4) The peculiarity of each man's obligations. Man has duties to perform in relation to himself, his race, his God, which no one in the universe can discharge for him. His obligations are untransferable.

Every man, then, has a business of his *own*, and attending to this, First: He will not be an *officious meddler* in the affairs of others. His hands will be so full of work in his *own* sphere that he will neither have the inclination nor the opportunity to interfere with the concerns of others. Secondly: He will most effectively *serve* the interest of others. By doing rightly the work of his own sphere, he will exert the most salutary influence around him. "No man can live unto himself."

II. It is to "BE QUIET." "Quiet" and "Business" are often found separated from each other. There is a Business where there is no quiet—noisy, fussy, all rattle and din. There is a Quiet where there is no business—lazy inactivity. The two—quiet and business—must go together in the true work of life. *Quiet work* is the true work. First: Quiet work is the *strongest work*. In quiet labour there is the plan and purpose of soul. There is concentrated force. It is not mere limb force, but life force. Secondly: Quiet work is the *happiest work*. In the work of bustle, excitement, and hurry, there is no happiness. But in quiet labour there is a harmonious play of all the faculties. Thirdly: Quiet work is the

divinest work. How sublimely quiet God works! His energy operates in the universe as noiseless as the sunbeam. He is the God of peace. How quietly Christ worked. "He did not cry, or cause his voice to be heard in the street," &c. It is not the bustling tradesman, merchant, politician, preacher, that does the strongest, happiest, divinest work. It is the man of quiet, resolute, unostentatious energy. Quiet work is not *slow* work; stars are silent, yet how swift their speed!

III. It is to be INTELLIGENT. "That ye study." Quiet work requires *study*. Noisy, bustling work is the result of caprice. Quiet work is the result of study. The more mind thrown into any work, the less noise. The most noisy preacher has the least mind. Study gives the worker, first: *A clear and definite object*. This prevents the excitement contingent on doubt and uncertainty. Study, Secondly: *Adapts the means*. It constructs a machinery of means exquisitely adapted to reach the end—a machinery whose joints and wheels are so lubricated by thought, that it moves on without creak or noise.

Such is the business of life. Who amongst us is doing this *Quiet work*?

THE ALTAR "OF UNHEWN STONE." — SIMPLICITY OF WORSHIP.

"And if thou wilt make me an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone."—Exod. xx. 25.

WE are far enough from professing to have discovered an intelligible and satisfactory reason for all the enactments of Sinai. The Great God of Reason had unquestionably reasons of infinite wisdom for every item of his code, and in the distant ages of futurity we may be permitted to have an appreciative insight into some, if not all. It is worthy of remark that not a few of those injunctions which seem inexplicable to us, so far as their reason is concerned, are strikingly suggestive, and thus useful in the work of spiritual culture. The enactment of the text is an example. Why the "altar" of sacrifice should be either of "earth" or of "unhewn stone," we cannot determine with accuracy. We may suggest reasons, but the best could only amount to conjecture. Albeit, we can turn the text to a useful purpose, and the very purpose to which we turn it may perhaps afford a glance at the reason on which it is grounded.

I. It indicates that RITUALISM IS NOT A NECESSITY of worship. Nothing was re-

quired in the outward exercise of devotion but an "altar" of rough earth and unchiselled stone. We do not say that ritualism is necessarily a wrong thing in connection with religion. A becoming ritualism may serve, in many ways, to promote spiritual devotion. In sooth, the Almighty Himself reared a magnificent temple and organised a gorgeous ritualism in connection with the worship of Himself, but still ritualism is *not necessary*. There can be worship at the rough "altar of unhewn stones" as well as in the temple where wealth has lavished its contributions and art exhausted its genius. "*God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.*" Worship is not a form; it is a *spirit*, and a spirit may take different forms; worship is not a service, but a *life*, and a life has many functions. "We are the circumcision which worship God in spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

II. It indicates that MERITORIOUSNESS MUST BE EXCLUDED from worship. No "tool" was to be used in the construction of this altar; neither chisel nor hammer was to be employed. The worshipper, therefore, would have no ground for supposing

that his devotions would be accepted on account of any work that he had wrought. There has ever been a sad tendency in men to imagine that because of some external service in connection with religion, they would secure the approbation of their Maker. They will contribute wealth, and even perform painful services, hoping thereby to merit the favour of Heaven. The work which God requires as essential to worship is not building altars, or giving money, but culturing the soul in true devotion. The latter is a harder work than the former. Hence men, instead of rendering the former subservient to it, make it the substitute. "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it. Thou delightest not in burnt-offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit. A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise."

III. It indicates that **UNIVERSALITY IS A CHARACTERISTIC** of worship. First: Worship is not confined to *places*. If it could be rendered only in certain buildings, however humble, or at certain altars, however rude, there would be some limitation. But, as an altar of earth or an altar of unhewn stones will do, you can worship anywhere. We live on earth, by earth. Away with that

impious doctrine of priestcraft which confines worship to certain consecrated spots. "The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father." Secondly: Worship is not confined to *persons*. If altars of a certain artistic description were required, then none could worship who had not the genius, the skill, the time, and the wealth to erect them. But as mere earthen altars will do, where is the man that cannot build them?

THE GOSPEL AND ITS OPPOSITION.

"Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field," &c.—Matt. xiii. 24—30.

As the "cluster of the grapes" which the spies brought back from the Promised Land, was only a specimen of its fruitfulness, so this parable is only one out of the many recorded in this chapter, which Christ delivered to the multitude that flocked together to hear him speaking as one having authority and not as the Scribes. "And without parable he spake not unto them." We observe—

I. THAT THE GOSPEL HAS GREAT DIFFICULTIES TO SURMOUNT. "His enemy came

and sowed tares among the wheat." At home. (1) *The habits of Society*. The mental habitudes of humanity are generally contrary to the fundamental principles of Christianity. (2) *The inconsistencies of its advocates*. The wide difference between the profession and the conduct of many professors of Christianity, repel many honest minds, and cause them to think that it is merely a delusion. Abroad. (1) *The hostility between different tribes and petty princes*. Such has often blighted the fondest hopes of our missionaries, deprived them of their property, and imperilled their lives. (2) *The introduction of Popery*. That has been recently done at Madagascar and other places. Popery, in its most favourable aspects is only a caricature of Christianity. (3) *Brutal behaviour of men from Christian lands*. Such caused the death of the Martyr of Eromanga. (4) *Introduction of intoxicating liquors*. As soon as the wheat is fairly cast into the ground, the enemy comes to sow tares. We notice—

II. THAT THE GOSPEL REQUIRES NO COERCIVE AGENCY. The servants said unto Him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But He said, Nay. Truth needs no secular arm

to prop it; it is of itself the strongest power in existence. It is the lever which will lift humanity from bondage to the glorious liberty of the children of God. (1) *Because it is spiritual in its nature and purpose*. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." Sovereigns, parliaments, and convocations, do not yoke spiritual and secular things unequally together! For what concord hath Christ with Belial? (2 Cor. vi. 14—16.) (2) *Because a worldly man cannot recognise the 'wheat' from the 'tares.'* "Lest when ye gather the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them." That has been often done by our Lauds, Jeffreys and Bonners. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Cor. 2—14.) We observe—

III. THAT PERSECUTIONS ARE NOT COUNTENANCED BY THE GOSPEL. "Let both grow together until the harvest." All ages produce their party disputants and Theological gladiators. Every section of the church generally has its "oracle." Because: (1) *The hour will come to distinguish between good and evil*. "The time of the harvest," viz.,

the day of judgment. That doctrine is clearly taught in the Holy Scriptures, and is deeply rooted in the belief of humanity. *Reason, conscience, and revelation* prove it. (2) *The difference will be recognised by the reward.* "Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat unto my barn." *Heaven* for the one, and *hell* for the other. (3) Let us examine ourselves, to which of these classes do we belong—"tares or wheat."

WILLIAM GRIFFITHS.

A DIVINE APPEAL.

"Why will ye die?"—Ezekiel xviii. 31.

THE insanity which prompts to self-destruction is most distressing. Forcible means must be employed to prevent the execution of the fell purpose, Those bent on spiritual, eternal self-destruction, not amenable to physical means of prevention. Moral means must be employed in dependence on the Holy Spirit.

The text contains four solemn questions in four words.

I. Why will ye DIE? Firstly: For death is so awful; not the extinction of thought, feeling, memory.—Rich man in hell. (Luke xvi.) Loss of all happiness;

hope. Exclusion from God and all that is pure and holy; dwelling in the place prepared for the devil and his angels. Secondly: How life is provided. (John iii. 16; 1 John v. 11; John x. 10.) Deliverance from condemnation; Freedom from the power of sin; Lazaraus freed from grave clothes; holiness now, blessedness for ever. The question no mockery, as it would be to a wretch on the gallows, if you had not a writ of pardon; as the angel's question to Hagar (Gen. xxi. 17) if the well had not been near. You are not like Tantalus, the river of water of life *rises* to your lips.

II. Why will YE die? Ezekiel wrote to the house of Israel. First: For you are surrounded by Gospel privileges. To *you* is the word of this salvation sent. You live in a Christian, Protestant land. Many children of pious parents. Secondly: For your punishment will be the more severe. Responsibility, equal to privilege. (Matt. xi. 21; Luke xii. 47, 48; Matt. xxiii. 14.) Better have been born in a heathen land.

III. Why WILL ye die? Do any say that an irreversible doom has made their destruction certain? Our text shows, that whoever is lost *wills* it. If otherwise, God's character is tarnished, justice,

truth. The Gospel is a delusion. Man is incapable of guilt—remorse. (John v. 40; Ezek. xviii. 32; Deut. xxx. 19)—“I here set before you . . . choose life.” So God in the Gospel.

IV. WHY will ye die? Some will in spite of God's provisions, and His warnings, and exhortations. Firstly: Because they love their sins better than their souls. “Cast away your transgressions”—the condition of salvation. No! I love and delight in them. Secondly: Because they will not give time to the serious consideration of these things. “Make you a clean heart.” This implies serious attention, prayer, &c.

When the question is put in the abode of the lost, *Why* did you die? you will say, I found time for reading, society, pleasure, business, but could find no time for religion! Thirdly: Because they refuse to believe in any danger. . . . Some awake to this only in eternity. (Luke xiii. 25.) . . . The text is a word of solemn warning against death. Our conclusion shall be a word of alluring invitation to life. “The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of *life* freely.”

Bath.

J. W.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CXII.)

SPEECH A ROD.

“In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.”—Prov. xiv. 3.

SPEECH is one of the distinguishing faculties of man. It is here spoken of as a “rod,” or an instrument of the soul. It is a *communicating* rod, or instrument. “Its chief object,” says Bishop Butler, “is plainly that we may communicate our thoughts to each other, in order to carry on the affairs of the world, for business,

and for learning.” Through this rod of speech souls flow and re-flow into each other. It is a *conquering* rod, or instrument. By speech a man often achieves his highest conquests, conquests over the thoughts, passions, purposes of minds. The mystic rod of Moses smote the rock of Horeb, and caused it to send forth refreshing streams; the rod of speech can smite the rock of souls, and make it stream with influences to refresh the mental desert. What wonders the rod of speech has done! The

text contains two things concerning this rod.

I. IT MAY BE SELF-INJURIOUS, OR SELF-ADVANTAGEOUS. It is said, "the lips of the wise shall preserve them," and the implied antithesis is, that those of the fool will injure them. First: *There is a speech that is self-injurious.* The hasty speech of evil passion, the unchaste speech of sensuality, the lying speech of untruthfulness; all such speech inflicts an injury upon the speaker. It blunts his moral sensibility; it lowers his self-respect; it degrades his social credit. The rod of speech is often an instrument of spiritual suicide. Secondly: *There is a speech that is self-advantageous.* "The lips of the wise shall preserve them." A chaste, truthful, benevolent, judicious speech, is a guardian-rod of souls. It preserves the character and the reputation of the speaker.

II. ITS RESULTS UPON THE SPEAKER, WHETHER SELF-INJURIOUS OR OTHERWISE, DEPENDS UPON HIS OWN CHARACTER. First: *The speech of the foolish must be self-injurious.* His speech is a "rod of pride." It is a rod that grows out of pride. By some the word rod here is understood as a shoot, or branch, as in the expression, "There shall come a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." Pride and foolishness are nearly related. A proud man is a fool. He does not know himself, the universe, or his God. Proud speech is the rod that grows out of a foolish heart; but the rod which the foolish heart grows, it also uses as its instrument, and its use must tend to self-destruction. Pride works ruin. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Secondly: *The speech of the wise must be self-advantageous.* The wise man is a good man, and a good man's

speech will tend to his own spiritual development, and the promotion of his spiritual powers. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." "Keep the heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

"The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that speaketh proud things; who have said, With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own; who is Lord over us." (Psa. xii. 3, 4.)

(No. CXIII.)

THE CLEAN CRIB, OR INDOLENCE.

"Where no oxen are, the crib is clean; but much increase is by the strength of the ox."—Prov. xiv. 4.

I. THE NEGATIVE GAIN OF INDOLENCE. The indolent man will not go to the trouble of keeping oxen, and therefore he has no crib to clean; work brings work. Industry creates business. If a man will go to the trouble of keeping oxen, he must look after them, "keep their cribs clean," &c. *Indolence saves labour.* First: *This is true in secular matters.* A man who will not cultivate his land will save all the toil of harvest. A man who is too lazy to embark in business will be freed from much anxious toil and a thousand anxieties connected with a mercantile life. Secondly: *This is true in intellectual matters.* A man who is too lazy to commence the work of self-culture, to strive after science, or to struggle after scholarship, will of course avoid all that study which is a "weariness to the flesh." Thirdly: *This is true of spiritual matters.* A man who will not take the trouble to ascertain the condition of his soul by looking into the glass of the Divine Word, will remain in that state of moral indifference by which he will escape all that battling against

inward corruptions, striving after spiritual holiness which the true feel to be a strenuous and unremitting conflict.

Thus a lazy man saves much work by not keeping oxen; he has no crib to clean.

II. THE POSITIVE LOSS OF INDOLENCE. "But much increase is by the strength of the ox." The man who keeps the ox, cleans out his crib, takes care of him, and industriously employs him in his fields, gets from him results that will more than compensate all his toil. Industry is potential wealth. In all true labour there is a profit. First: *What an indolent man loses in secular matters.* He loses (1) The pleasure of gaining wealth. There is often more gratification in the pursuit of riches than in their possession. (2) He loses the pleasure of rightly using wealth. The generous heart alone can tell the exquisite delight connected with the distribution of wealth for the relief of the distressed, the promotion of knowledge, and the advancement of human happiness. Secondly: *What an indolent man loses in intellectual matters.* What glorious mental results grow out of laborious study, well disciplined faculties, varied treasures of knowledge, great social influences. Mental riches, unlike material, are inalienable, they cannot take to themselves wings and flee away. Thirdly: *What an indolent man loses in spiritual matters.* How great the joy of a spiritually disciplined soul, "it is a joy unspeakable, and full of glory." Here, then, is a choice for men. Indolence or industry. Indolence will save work, but lose its splendid results. Industry will have hard work, but out of it will come "*much increase,*" increase of the highest good.

(No. CXIV.)

VERACITY AND WISDOM.

"A faithful witness will not lie; but a false witness will utter lies. A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not: but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth."—Prov. xiv. 5, 6.

I. HERE WE HAVE THE SUBJECT OF VERACITY. "A faithful witness will not lie." This is so much like a truism, that it will scarcely call for a remark. It means that a true man will be true in his expressions; an untrue man will be false. Two things, however, may be implied in it. First: *That veracity in witness-bearing is very important.* Lies are bad everywhere—in the family, in the market, &c.; they are bad in themselves, and bad in their consequences, but they are worse in the court of justice than anywhere else. *Perjury* is the worse form of lying. It frustrates justice, and when the oath is added, it involves the blasphemy of taking God's name in vain. Secondly: *That veracity in witness-bearing can only be secured by a truthful character.* The true man will be true everywhere; the false man, false everywhere. The only way, therefore, to put down lying in courts of justice, and everywhere else, is the making of men true and right in heart. This Christianity does.

II. HERE WE HAVE THE SUBJECT OF WISDOM. "A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not, but knowledge is easy unto him that understandeth." Two things are implied in this. First: *That the attainment of wisdom is a very desirable thing.* Wisdom includes two things. (1) Acquisition of the highest knowledge. The knowledge of man, his nature, condition, relations, responsibilities. God, his being, character, laws, works, &c. (2) The right application of this knowledge. Knowledge is only really useful to us as

we practically apply it. All the arts that bless and adorn the civilized world are but the practical application of scientific knowledge. The sublime life of godliness is theology practically applied. This is wisdom. Secondly: *The attainment of wisdom depends upon the spirit of the seeker.* "A scorner seeketh wisdom, and findeth it not," &c. No character is more despicable than the scorner. This spirit includes *pride*. He sneers at a truth—indicating intellectual pride. He sneers at a person—indicating social pride. *Irreverence*. He scoffs at God. *Heartlessness*. He is regardless of the feelings of others. A man with such a spirit can never get wisdom. He has not the eye to see truth, even though it stand incarnated in a glorious personality. Pilate with this scoffing spirit saw it in this form, and yet asked, "what is truth?" The scoffer, even in seeking wisdom, attains confounding fictions.

"Hear the just doom, the judgment of the skies,
He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies;
And he who *will* be cheated to the last,
Delusions, strong as hell, shall bind him fast."

That wisdom is easily attained by him that understandeth; by the man that has the true spirit, the spirit of humble docility which Samuel, Mary, and Cornelius had. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God."

(No. CXV)

THE SOCIETY TO BE SHUNNED.

"Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge."—Prov. xiv. 7.

MAN is a social being, his natural affinities and relations show that he is made to a great extent for others, and that others are made for him. So far from

reaching perfection in isolation, his very existence would be intolerable in absolute solitude. The text holds up the society which we should avoid—the society of the foolish. A "foolish" man here stands for a "bad" man. The text suggests that the society of such should be avoided for three reasons—

I. IT IS UNPROFITABLE. "Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge." What you want in society is knowledge. True knowledge—knowledge that (1) shall rightly guide, (2) truly comfort, and (3) religiously inspire the soul, but such knowledge is not to be got from the foolish man. He has no power to help you, and, therefore, time spent in his society is waste time, and you have no time to lose.

II. IT IS MISLEADING. "The folly of fools is deceit." First: *They cheat themselves*. They fancy they have the true ideas, and the true pleasures, but it is a miserable delusion. "A depraved heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." Secondly: *They cheat others*. They mislead and entangle by the falsehood of their speech and the craftiness of their policy. Thirdly: *It is wicked*. They "make a mock at sin." Sin, the greatest insult to God, and the greatest curse to humanity—fools make a mock at. The spirit of mocking at sin is the most impious, cruel, infatigable; and from those who possess it we should flee as from the savage beasts of prey. "Go," then, "from the presence of a foolish man." Seek the society of the wise, whose society is profitable, who have the lips of knowledge, whose society is truthful. "The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way." Whose society is good. "Among the righteous there is favour."

(No. CXVI.)

THE HEART'S HIDDEN DEPTHS.

"The heart knoweth his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy."—Prov. xiv. 10.

THOUGH men live in towns and cities, and in social gatherings, each man is a world to himself. He is as distinct, even from him who is in closest material or mental contact with him, as one orb of heaven is from another. Though governed by the common laws of his race, he has an orbit of his own, an atmosphere of his own, and abysses of life into which no eye but the eye of God can pierce.

I. THE HEART HAS HIDDEN DEPTHS OF SORROW. "The heart knoweth his own bitterness." There is bitterness in every heart. There is the bitterness of *disappointed love*—the soul recoiling with agony at the discovery that its affections had been misplaced. There is the bitterness of *social bereavement*—Rachels weeping for their lost children, and Davids for their Absaloms. There is the *bitterness* of moral remorse. All this is hidden where it is the most deep. The deepest sorrow in the human heart is hidden from others from three causes. First: The insulating tendency of deep grief. Deep sorrow withdraws from society and seeks some Gethsemane of solitude. Men cannot do a greater outrage than intrude on the notice of men in grief. Secondly: *The concealing instinct of deep grief*. Men parade little sorrows, but conceal great ones. "The Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief" mentioned his distress to no one but to God. Deep sorrows are mute. Thirdly: *The incapacity of one soul to sound the depths of another*. There is such a peculiarity in the constitution and circumstances of each soul,

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that one can never fully understand another.

II. THE HEART HAS HIDDEN DEPTHS OF JOYS. "A stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy." Though joy is less self-concealing than sorrow, yet it has depths unknown to any but its possessor and its God. The joy that rushed into Abraham's heart when Isaac descended with him from the altar on Moriah; the joy of the father when he pressed his prodigal son to his bosom; the joy of the widow of Nain when her only son raised himself from the bier, and returned to gladden her lowly home; the joy of the heart-broken woman when she heard Christ say, "Thy sins are all forgiven thee;" such joy has depths that no outward eye could penetrate. The joy of the true Christian is indeed a joy "unspeakable and full of glory."

This subject furnishes an argument. First: *For candour amongst men*. We do not fully know each other, therefore we ought to be generous and candid in our treatment. "What man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man which is in him." Secondly: *For piety towards God*. Though men know us not, God does. He knows what is in man, and more, he has the deepest interest in our sorrows. "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." (Isa. lxiii. 9.)

(No. CXVII.)

THE SOUL'S HOME.

"The house of the wicked shall be overthrown: but the tabernacle of the upright shall flourish."—Prov. xiv. 11. THE house and the tabernacle in the passage here, must be taken in

the most generic sense, as meaning more than the mere tenement, whether of bricks, or stone, or canvas, in which the man physically resides. The words may be taken to mean all that externalism of a man's life in which he feels the most interest, from which he derives the most pleasure—that is really his home. The pleasing surroundings of his life constitute the real house or tabernacle in which he lives.

I. IN THE CASE OF THE WICKED THIS HOME IS DOOMED TO RUIN. "The house of the wicked shall be overthrown." Is *business* the home of his soul? Does he, the thinking, conscious man, dwell more in it than anywhere else? His business will pass from him. Is *wealth* the home of his soul? Some men live (without figure) in their gold. The wealth of the wicked will depart. We brought nothing into the world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. Is *society* the home of his soul? There are many who live in

society. The *fellowship* of others is their home; this in the case of the wicked, is doomed to be overthrown. There are no friendships for the ungodly in the future.

II. IN THE CASE OF THE RIGHTEOUS THIS HOME IS DESTINED TO FLOURISH. "The tabernacle of the upright shall flourish." Where is the home of the righteous? Where his heart is. And where is that? First: *In the cause of Divine benevolence*. In the advance of truth, in the extension of goodness, the progress of humanity, he feels the strongest interest. This cause shall flourish. It must go on. Heaven and earth shall pass away sooner than it shall fail. Secondly: *In the society of the holy and the true*. The fellowship of the true disciple of Christ is the heaven of his nature, and that shall flourish, it shall increase in numbers, purity, goodness, and influence. "We having received a kingdom that cannot be moved, let us have grace to worship in reverence and godly fear."

Theological Notes and Queries.

OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

THE GREAT PROPITIATION.

Replicant.—In answer to *Querist* No. 16, p. 352, Vol. XVII., and continued from p. 297, Vol. XX.

IV. *The atonement of Christ as explained by the theory of expediency.*

Thinking men, one by one, became dissatisfied with the various

theories already mentioned. Some of the objections which have been stated seemed to them to be insurmountable. Grotius gave up the necessity of substitution altogether, and proposed a theory of expediency. Gilbert, in his Congregational lecture, denied all substitutionary or expiatory reference in the atonement of Christ

in relation to children who died in infancy. After many oscillations the majority seem to be now settling down to the theory of expediency.

As I am anxious to give a fair statement of each theory, it will be better done, in this case, by quotations from authors who accept and advocate the expedient view of the Christian atonement. Dr. Pye Smith says that the atonement is a "compensative resource, by which the salvation of the sinner may be obtained, in consistency with the honours of the divine government."

Here it is asserted that the atonement (*a*) affects God as governor; (*b*) compensates the governor, or state, for the wrong doings of sinners, and (*c*) renders possible—"may"—the salvation of these sinners. But it seems to me that it really renders their salvation *necessary*; for if a government, if public justice receives compensation for wrong, would it not be unjust on the part of that government to punish the wrong doer? If it be right to punish the criminal it is because the compensation has not been in all points complete; but in the case of the atonement the compensation is supposed fully to cover all losses resulting from crime.

Dr. Jenkyn says the "atonement is an expedient substituted in the place of the literal infliction of the penalty, so as to supply to the government just and good ground for dispensing favours to an offender." This definition is far less definite, and therefore less satisfactory, than the preceding one by Dr. Pye Smith. In both the atonement affects God as governor; in both the possibility and not the necessity of pardon is supposed: but in the former this is secured by compensating the government; in the latter it

is not stated how the possibility is attained. In fact, the whole matter is a mere assumption.

Dr. Wardlaw gives a more comprehensive definition in these words:—"The grand design is to preserve unsullied the glory of the great principles of eternal rectitude; to show the impossibility of the claims of equity, founded in these principles, and essential to the government of the universe, being dispensed with; to settle in the minds of God's intelligent creatures, as the subjects of his moral administration, the paramount obligation and immutable permanence of their claims; to give such a manifestation of the divine regard to these elements of his immaculate administration as to preclude the possibility of any, the remotest, surmise that in the pardon of sin they have been at all overlooked or placed in abeyance; and thus to render it consistent with divine propriety, or, in other words, honourable to the whole character as well as to the law and government of Jehovah, to extend pardoning mercy to the guilty and to reinstate them in his favour, according to the provisions of the Gospel." This definition by a multiplicity of words and a variety of matter seems to refer to something wonderfully great. But let us carefully analyze the definition and express it more briefly and simply. The definition asserts that our Lord by his death, (1) preserved the glory of justice; (2) showed the perpetuity of the claims of justice; (3) proved God's regard to these principles and claims, notwithstanding the forgiveness of transgressors; and (4) rendered the salvation of sinners honourable to the government of God. The fault of such a definition is not simply its length, but specially that no effort is made in any part

by sorrow for every thought and act of sin; and mercy may, in a similar manner, pass over the claims of public justice. After all, mercy, by a peculiar process of her own, meets, most fully, the claims of every kind of justice, not in the letter, but in the spirit.

While it is acknowledged that mercy meets the claims of retributive justice if they are met at all, the theorists to whom we now refer, assume that those of public justice are met alone by the death of Jesus. Public justice has reference to the well-being of a whole community (*Hare*); and in this case has reference to the happiness of all God's intelligent creatures. A firm persuasion of the justice of God as well as of his benevolence, is essential to their happiness; and it is supposed that both his benevolence and justice are proved by the death of Christ. Dr. Wardlaw wisely leaves out, however, from his definition, every reference to the benevolence of God. "He gave his Son," it is true, to suffering, but that of itself is no proof of benevolence; it may be proof rather of a deficiency of natural affection. A good father might have sacrificed his own life, but surely could not have inflicted infinite pain upon his son. On the supposition which underlies this theory, that the Son—that Jesus Christ—was a different being from God, the sufferings of the Son are manifest proofs of his own benevolence, but certainly *prove* nothing in that way of God, his Father.

Do the sufferings of Christ demonstrate the justice of God as a Governor—the justice of the divine administration? Let us look at the Crucifixion from a distant point, as it would be looked upon by intelligent beings throughout the creation. How does the matter seem to stand?

Rebellion has taken place in a small province of the empire. A whole nation is found guilty of treason; but among the rest there is one of whose innocence there is no question. He has obeyed the laws of his country under every condition of being. He is, confessedly, unconnected with the revolt. True, he has an affection for the rebels, and is heartily sorry for their lot; still he hates their rebellion. He pities them most sincerely, and is anxious that they should have another trial after they have received his teaching on the relation of subjects to their rulers. He offers to suffer anything for them, and the government accepts of his offer, and speedily hasten his public execution. The guilty are free and the innocent suffers. I do confess that I see no justice here. If the government be so regardless of personal merit that it cares not whether the innocent or the guilty endures the pain, I should be suspicious that the next act would be the punishment of the innocent without any personal consent. At any rate, I have no doubt that such a conduct on the part of any human government would meet with general disapproval; and surely that which would be disgraceful in the government of men, cannot be glorious in the government of God.

Archbishop Trench undertakes to meet this objection (see *HOMILIST*, Vol. XVIII., p. 348), by supposing many acts committed by the scholars of a school, each act being deserving of punishment. Among the scholars there is a young prince, whose conduct is blameless. He offers to suffer the punishment instead of his fellow-scholars, and assures the teacher that that is the only way in which the good conduct of the scholars can be secured for all future time. Dr. Trench regards the punish-

ment of the prince under these conditions, as perfectly just.

Men's consciences seem to be made of very different materials. First of all Dr. Trench introduces into his statement of the case an element which is foreign to it. "The punishment of the prince will secure the future obedience of the scholars, and nothing else will." Now, that is an assumption, a pure assumption, as applied to the death of Christ. Supposing our Saviour's death not to be the result of any punishment inflicted upon Him by God, but undertaken to show his infinite love—God's infinite love—to man; would not his death, viewed in that light, be as likely to prevent men from sinning, as his death viewed as an infliction of God? It seems to me that there was no need for our Lord's death to be the result of any punishment, in order that that death might be a stimulus to virtue, and a check to sin. It might be the result of self-sacrifice just as well.

But apart altogether from this groundless assumption, let us look at the punishment of the prince in its relation to justice. To me the conduct of the teacher who accepted the offer of the prince and inflicted upon him the punishment, would seem monstrously unjust. The generous and heroic disposition of the prince would be worthy of the highest admiration. His willingness to suffer might beneficially act upon the disobedient, and a free forgiveness given to the transgressors, under these peculiar circumstances, on condition of a promise to reform, might be justifiable; but the man who took advantage of the generosity of the prince and inflicted pain upon him, would be nothing better than a brute, void of any sense of justice or propriety.

Suffering for others is the highest and truest virtue. But

while one individual might voluntarily undergo pain and loss for another, he would be acting in a region of morality far higher than justice—in the region of mercy; but a government, as the maintainer of justice, could never agree to the acceptance of the pain of the innocent, for the punishment of the guilty. Our Lord sacrificed his life in promoting human welfare. His sufferings were voluntarily undertaken, and so far it was all mercy; but had another party—a second person—inflicted pain as the penalty of sin, the whole transaction would have been lowered into the region of justice, and the conduct of the latter would have been unjust.

The first assumption having failed, let us consider the *second assumption*—viz., that the death of Christ showed the perpetuity and continuity of the claims of public justice. This it did not do. The claims of public justice are supposed to be actually set aside. Public justice—justice which secures the happiness of the virtuous community—can never be satisfied unless the criminal *himself* suffer the evil consequence of his evil deeds. If he be not actually punished, he must undergo a painful process of genuine sorrow for sin, and become permanently virtuous. But if the criminal is not punished, is not even required to find either surety or substitute, but has these found for him by the king, how can the virtuous population be assured that such crimes will not be repeated? The king seems to favour the felon, and shield him from justice by providing a substitute. According to this theory, the guilty is free and acquitted, and an innocent person, in no way connected with the crime, is publicly dishonoured, and that by the chief magistrate. Crime is not punished, but advantage is taken

of the generosity and heroism of an innocent being, to secure a public execution—an execution, however, which leaves the claims of public justice untouched, and the virtuous subjects in a state of jeopardy.

These two assumptions having failed, it is evident that the others fall to the ground also, as they are built upon these. The claims of justice are disregarded, and the salvation of man, according to the theory of expediency, reflects no honour on the government of God.

Of all the theories considered, this now discussed is the least satisfactory, because the least logical. The theory of debt, in its Calvinistic aspect, as set forth in the writings of Dr. Owen and President Edwards, is the most logical; only it reduces the divine benevolence to a minimum; renders the love of God much less than that of ordinary men, and makes salvation of justice, and not of grace.

The expedient theory, moreover, gives too prominent a place to fear as a motive to obedience. One of the principal objects of a public execution is to benefit the virtuous community by terrifying those who might be prone to commit acts of violence, and thus prevent the recurrence of crime. The death of Christ is supposed thus to act upon the intelligent creation. But experience in connection with public executions has abundantly shown that fear is one of the weakest motives of virtue; and experience has proved, on the other hand, that the mightiest motive to holy deeds is the manifestation of disinterested benevolence. If, therefore, enmity against God, or want of love to Him, be the fountain of which sin is but the stream, it follows that the shortest and safest way of preventing sin is to destroy exist-

ing hatred. Love alone engenders love, and, therefore, whatever shows the love of God, supplies the strongest motive of obedience.

The theory of expediency, after all, fails to supply great fear as a motive of holy life; for fear arises in proportion to the *certainty* of punishment, and not its severity. This is proved most abundantly by the history of crime in our own country. But does the death of our Lord, according to the theory of expediency, show it probable that, in case of future sin, the sinner shall be surely punished? Not in the least. In the case of human sin the sinner is not punished, but a make-believe of severity is shown by the suffering of an innocent person, and the sinner who escapes is not required to take any part in the finding of a substitute, but all things are arranged without his aid. It is not wise to generalize from a single case, but as far as this case goes to prove anything, the natural inference is, that if any other race of beings should sin—should venture upon rebellion—the punishment will fall upon some sinless substitute, and not upon the transgressors, and this will be found for them by the king, so that they need not be in trouble. I do not mention the death of Christ as proving anything in relation to the treatment of future sinners, but simply say, that if it *does* prove anything, as is assumed by theorists, it proves the non-probability of the punishment of actual sinners, and thus encourages rebellion rather than obedience. But if the sinner escapes punishment only on condition that he passes through the painful process of repentance—hates sin and loves holiness so intensely that to sin becomes an impossibility, and to do good a necessity, then is the heinousness of sin and the sublimity of obedi-

ence recognised in the most forcible manner. Such an acknowledgment of the misery of sin, and the advantages of a holy life by one whose experience embraced both, would be a real discouragement to evil, as well as an incentive to good.

An incident of recent occurrence bears very forcibly on the subject which is now being discussed.

A young woman, belonging to the higher rank of life, under the influence of malice, committed murder. Suspicion fell on others, but the real culprit escaped the hand of justice, and lived in apparent peace. Years passed away, and the crime was well nigh forgotten. But the guilty conscience found no rest. Night and day the agonies of that solitary heart were far beyond conception. She felt truly sorry for her sin, and so terrible did the hideous deed appear to her, that life itself became a burden. As a fearful crime had been committed, and some suspicion still clung to those who were innocent of the crime, she felt that in justice to these the crime should be acknowledged, and that for the honour of her country, whose laws punished murder by death, she ought to die the felon's death.

Under the influence of such motives she made a full confession and wished to die. But her death was thought to be unnecessary by the government of the land. It was felt by all that public justice had been satisfied, though not in the letter, yet in the spirit. Such sorrow for sin, such free confession of personal guilt, such recognition of the blessedness of virtue and the misery of wrongdoing, reflected the highest honour on her country's laws, and furnished the most forcible inducements to a life of virtue, and met really the claims of public

justice far more effectively and fully than her death beneath the gallows would have done. The pardon of sin, under similar conditions would seem to be more to the honour of God as the Governor of the universe than the punishment of impenitence would be; for in the punishment of sin there is no acknowledgment of its evil or disadvantages, on the part of the criminal, nor is there, on his part, any recognition of the superiority of obedience.

V. *The atonement of Christ as explained by other theories.*

Many other theories of the atonement have been proposed, some of which are probably unknown to me, but upon the whole I find them to be very unsatisfactory. Mr. McLeod Campbell has proposed a species of representative theory. The Rev. Baldwin Brown in "The Divine Life" seems to accept that theory as satisfactory, and Dr. Bushnell works it out more fully. The theory seems to have been suggested by an expression of President Edwards, who says, That to satisfy divine justice there must be "*either an equivalent punishment, or an equivalent sorrow and repentance.*" Edwards accepts the equivalent punishment, and believes a punishment to have been inflicted upon Christ equivalent to that deserved by all the elect. Campbell rejects the theory of Edwards and accepts the alternative supposition of equivalent sorrow and repentance, and believes that our Lord, as a man, sorrowed and repented for sin instead of all men, and in virtue of his divine nature this sorrow and repentance were sufficiently intense to satisfy the demands of divine justice.

The chief, and as I think fatal, objection to this theory is, that it is a mere assumption or hypothesis. Our Saviour is never represented

as repenting for men; besides, His own innocence rendered repentance impossible, for repentance is possible only to the guilty.

This theory seems to me scarcely to deserve any notice at all. Like the others, it requires the separation of Christ and God. It moreover requires the genuine repentance of an innocent person, which is impossible, and it assumes that for the repentance of one many others are accepted, which seems to me equally absurd.

It will be observed by the thoughtful reader, that I have carefully abstained from proposing any theory. My object has been to show that the various theories which have been proposed have been erroneous, believing that the first step in attaining to the truth is to re-

move all error. My aim has been negative and destructive. What I have written has been written not to support any theory, but rather to show thoughtful men that the subject of the atonement of Christ requires, on the part of Christian people, reconsideration. All preceding theories must be abandoned, and the whole subject must be studied *de novo*. It remains for me only to show, by an examination of particular texts, that the theories referred to are unscriptural, to complete the demonstration of the common errors of Evangelical Churches, and to clear the ground for the positive and constructive part of the subject.

GALILEO.

(To be continued.)

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE GREAT POSSESSION. By RICHARD BELL. London: Wesleyan Conference Office, City-road.

THE two truths sought to be established in this volume are, that every human being possesses a soul—a percipient, rational, and voluntary spirit additional to his body; and that the glorious Gospel of Christ imparts to it intelligent satisfaction and hope. These truths, which are confessedly important, lack the charm of freshness. They have been discussed a thousand times, and they are widely acknowledged, yet they are so vital to every human being that they cannot be urged with too much frequency and force upon the attention of men. The work is divided into six chapters, the subjects of which are—the existence, nature, greatness, aspirations, immortality, perfectibility, and

Want it

claims of the human soul. Under these various heads a very large number of subjects is embraced. The opinions of some of our abler philosophers and theological writers are examined in their relation to the subjects discussed, and the examination shows in keenness and breadth of soul that the author is a match for some of our highest thinkers. The book abounds with profound thoughts, vigorously expressed. The spirit is at once scientific and Christian. The late eminent Sir C. B. Brodie urged the printing of this work, and expressed his approval of the treatment of the subject. We endorse his opinion, and heartily commend the volume to all who desire to see the greatest truths discussed by a Christian philosopher.

SHORT ARGUMENTS ABOUT THE MILLENNIUM. By B. C. YOUNG.
London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row, E.C.

PRE-MILLENNARIANISM and **Ritualism**: which are the greater evils in connection with Christianity? The former prevails amongst what are called the "Evangelicals" in the Church, the latter amongst the "Tractarian" section. But the former is not confined to the Episcopal Church; it is co-extensive with Plymouth Brethrenism. It is gaining ground even amongst Nonconformist ministers. For ourselves, we are not only deeply convinced of its unscripturalness, but of its baneful influence. Like Ritualism, it grows amongst the sensuous in religion, and, therefore, we fear that arguments, however cogent and conclusive, will do but little execution amongst its votaries. However, such works as the one before us, demonstrating that the coming of Christ will not be pre-millennial, and that His reign on earth will not be personal, we heartily welcome as antidotes to a pernicious popular error. The work is evidently written by one who has earnestly and diligently studied the question, and has attained strong convictions as to the unscripturalness of the doctrine against which he sets his arguments.

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF THOMAS BROOKS. Edited, and with Memoir.
By REV. ALEXANDER GROSART. Vol. V. Edinburgh: James Nichol. London: James Nisbet and Co.

HERE is a fifth volume from Brooks, whom we regard as one of the best of the old divines. We have already frequently referred to him and commended his works. Those old preachers said about their contemporary brethren what would be pronounced most uncharitable for modern preachers to say. Here, for example, is a specimen. "Some preachers in our day are like Heraclitus, who was called the dark doctor, because he affected dark speeches, so they affect sublime notions, obscure expressions, uncouth phrases, making plain truths difficult, and easy truths hard, &c. They 'darken counsel by words without know-

ledge.' Job xxxviii. 2. Men of abstract conceits and wise speculations are but wise fools; like the lark that soareth on high, peering and peering, but at last falleth into the net of the fowler. Such persons commonly are as censorious as they are curious and do Christ and his Church but very little service in this world."

AN EXPOSITION. With Notes Unfolded and Applied on John xviii.
By GEORGE NEWTON. Edinburgh: James Nichol. London:
James Nisbet.

THE author of this volume was born in Devonshire, 1602, entered Exeter College, Oxford, 1616, took his degree of M.A., 1624, and was ordained by Laud, then Bishop of Bath and Wells, to the perpetual curacy of Hill Bishop. Upon the breaking out of the rebellion, he sided with the Presbyterians, and in 1662 was numbered twenty-three among the ejected. He died in 1681, and was buried in the chancel of his older church in Taunton. Calamy says of him that his preaching was plain, practical, and successful, and that he was eminent for his meekness and prudence. He was by no means an eminent man in comparison with some of the Puritans. This exposition does not appear to us to have much value.

THE PREACHER'S COUNSELLOR. By ATHANASE COQUEREL. Translated
by the REV. R. A. BERTRAM. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster-row.

THE author of this work is one of the most eloquent pulpit orators of this century. Whilst we reject some of his theological opinions we thankfully accept most of his homiletic rules. The work treats of a large variety of subjects in connection with preachers and preaching. It exposes many of those vices and absurdities connected with the pulpit which have tended wondrously to degrade the institution in the estimation of thinking men. It points out the path by which a pulpit excellence may be reached. It abounds with many striking anecdotes bearing on the subject. It is in every way a work worthy the thoughtful perusal of preachers.

WORDS OF COMFORT FOR PARENTS BEREAVED OF LITTLE CHILDREN.
Edited by WILLIAM LOGAN. London: James Nisbet, Berners
Street.

THIS is a work that we have already noticed, and that has reached its third edition. We need scarcely do more than mention that it is composed of a selection of passages from a variety of religious writers, relating to the death of children. Though some of the selections are not, perhaps, of the first-class, yet many are excellent, and admirably adapted to the end intended.

Want X

MAN'S RENEWAL. By **AUSTIN PHELPS.** Alexander Strahan, 56, Ludgate Hill, London.

THIS work is composed of four chapters, the subjects of which are conversion, its nature—regeneration, the work of God—truth, the instrument of regeneration—responsibility, as related to sovereignty in the new birth; and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We consider that the work of Dr. Anderson on "Regeneration," is one of the best in our language on the subject, and the one before us does not seem in any way inferior. It is an admirable production. Its exposition of the subject, whilst it agrees with the teaching of Scripture, chimes with the voice of philosophy and experience, and the author is serious in conviction, strong in argument, succinct in phrase.

LECTURES ON THE BOOK OF REVELATION. By **JOHN BROWN, B.A.** London: Pitman, 20, Paternoster Row.

WE have been long waiting for a work on the book of Revelation of a thoroughly practical character—a book stripping the Apocalypse of all its imagery, and laying bare those great principles that are true to man everywhere, and for ever. Such a work has not yet come into our hands. The one before us approaches it as nearly as any one we have seen. The work has much good thought in it, and the writing is clear and strong.

REASON AND RELIGION. By **R. E. HOOPFELL, M.A., F.R.A.S.** London: William Macintosh, 24, Paternoster Row.

THIS is a course of seventeen short lectures on what are called the leading doctrines of Christianity. Many of the difficulties which the thoughtful reader of the Bible experiences in his endeavours to believe in some of its leading doctrines, are obviated in these discourses. The work is thoughtful, plain, and practical—an admirable volume to put into the hands of young converts.

OUT OF HARNESS. By **THOMAS GUTHRIE, D.D.** Alexander Strahan, 56, Ludgate Hill, London.

THIS book is a republication of articles that appeared in the "Sunday Magazine," and, therefore, its contents must be familiar to most of our readers. They are well worth working into a permanent volume. The illustrious author does not require us either to characterize his style, or commend his productions. The heart of a Christian philanthropist beats in every sentence, and the rays of genius flash on every page.

CONCERNING THE COLLECTION. By **JOHN CRAPS.** London: Elliot Stock. THIS letter contains many admirable remarks as to the duty and mode of contributing to the cause of philanthropy and religion.



A HOMILY

ON

Christianity the Great.

"That, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth."—Ephes. i. 10.



HERE are many subjects of grand and engrossing interest in our text.

I. THE CRISIS OF THE UNIVERSE.—The expression, "the fulness of time," and its equivalents, occur more than once in Scripture. Its meaning is sufficiently obvious. It appears to refer to the climax or culmination of a particular cycle in the providence of God, and is applied by way of pre-eminence to the consummation of the Redemptive scheme by the coming of Christ Jesus in the flesh—made of a woman, made under the law.

But as in the physical arrangements of the universe there are primary and secondary revolutions, each complete in itself, yet all contributing to the grander development of one majestic system—"cycle on epicycle, orb on orb"—so in the mysterious scheme of God's providence, there seems to be a wheel in the middle of a wheel, a planetary and solar economy, so to speak, in the moral government of the world. The period referred to in our text, we conceive to be the

climax of one of these grander periods, in which a circle of events usually regarded as full, final, and complete in itself, is made to take up a subsidiary position. For, be it observed, the plural term is here used, and a system of periods, and not merely one particular period, is spoken of. The scheme, or "dispensation," is made up of many fulnesses, each constituent chain of providences forming but one link in the greater chain which here unites the beginning with the end of God's purposes.

As with Ezekiel on the banks of Chebar, the heavens seem opened to us by this text, and we see visions of God. "The appearance of the wheels, and their work is, as it were, a wheel in the middle of a wheel," moving noiselessly forward, without variableness, or shadow of turning, never swerving from its purpose, "full of eyes," and influenced simultaneously with the ministering spirits that pass in and out amongst them, but all working together for good to those who love God and are the called according to his purpose. Some of these providential cycles, these wheels of destiny, may have seemed to our unschooled vision "so high that they were dreadful"; but all have been full of eyes, all have been moved and stayed by an ever-wakeful God, and all have been tending toward this Crisis of crises—"the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times."

If we look at our text from this point of view, with what consummate grandeur and majesty does the Gospel scheme become invested! The climax of the universe, with its myriad intelligences, is identified with the completion of the great work of redemption. "All things in heaven, and all things in earth" look to Jesus in his full-orbed royalty as the sun and centre of their sublimest aspirations. When God, bringing his first-begotten into the world, commanded all the angels of God to worship Him, a grand climax was reached in the procedure of his purposes of grace. So, also, when Christ poured out his soul unto death, and the cry, so full at once of anguish and exultation, was uttered, "It is finished!" Again, when He ascended up on high, leading

captivity captive, what an important cycle was completed! But all these are here woven into one stupendous dispensation—"the Dispensation of the Fulness of Times." Look again at—

II. THE SCENE OF REDEMPTION. When the first Napoleon, with a few of his more intimate and favoured friends, was flying, sallow and sullen, from the plains of Waterloo after his memorable defeat, the retinue was of course watched with the utmost earnestness by those who had come out to learn the fortunes of that fatal day. It was easy at once to see that the arms of France had suffered a disastrous reverse, and everyone asked eagerly *where* the sad event had taken place. The word "Waterloo!" was murmured and re-murmured along the route, and the people, collecting into groups, discussed with considerable excitement the supposed whereabouts of that village. Those best conversant with the locality maintained resolutely that no such place existed, till at length the credibility of the whole story began to be doubted, because of the extreme insignificance of a spot now pre-eminent in the history of nations.

In a spirit somewhat akin to this have the rejectors of Revelation regarded that section of the universe where the stupendous battle of man's Redemption has been fought. According to their ideas, this infinitesimal speck in the limitless wilds of God's universe would be very far below the consideration of a Being who had strewn all space with such myriads of planets, suns, and systems. The objection seems to us a very foolish one, as it imports a material element into the region of metaphysics and religion, and makes the question of bulk, measure, and specific gravity, necessary constituents in the educational and spiritual government of intellectual existences. They cannot complain if, for the sake of consistency, we suppose that their views of the Bible-scheme are of very small type indeed, and that they believe God to have chosen so small a world in which to carry out his plan, because it affected primarily the interests *only* of an obscure

people, destitute of art, science, literature, or refinements of any kind, and that these people were not to influence the surrounding nations, by whom, in fact, they would be contemptuously ignored. Schooled by a succession of seers and prophets, rising up one after another, they were at length to be visited by a Divine Teacher, called the Son of God, who, being rejected by them and put to death, was by that death to procure for them and for a few others the blessings of glory, honour, and immortality.

But how is this narrow and unworthy view of Christianity rebuked by the magnificent text on which we are remarking ! Of all the inconsistent charges brought by the sceptic, the rationalist, and the deist against the Bible, the most contemptible is assuredly that of littleness, as contrasted with the other modes and *media* by which He has made Himself known to man. These men tell us they want no Bible, and that the volume of nature is sufficient to instruct them in the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Almighty. But we think that they would look in vain among the "elder scripture" of the stars, or the glories of other districts of creation without arriving at any such sublime disclosures as are opened up to us by these verses. Let it, moreover, be borne in mind that all the many orders of intelligences above man, belong *exclusively* to the Christian : the deist has no claim to any one of them. Angels, archangels, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers, cherubim, seraphim, and all the glorious hierarchy of heaven, are introduced to us *only* in that volume which they regard as insignificant, heterodox, and unnecessary. They seem to have mistaken mere magnitude for majesty, and illimitable space for consummate grandeur ; but if God be Mind, as even these reasoners will admit, surely his highest glory must consist in his mental and moral rule over beings of the loftiest type of intellect. The divine kingdom advocated by the deist, is the mere rule over inert matter, motion and irrational life, with one solitary exception in favour of Reason, as it inheres only in the lowest type of all — fallen and fallible Humanity.

Look for one moment at the glory that accrues to God from the gathering outlined in our text, and contrast it with the deist's ideal of universal worship. In both cases the object is the Great Father of all ; but how unlike, the anthem ! In the one case "thousand thousands minister unto Him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before Him," all of the grandest type of intellect—angels and archangels that excel in strength, mentally, morally, spiritually, as well as physically : in the other, material and irrational natures, consummated by the lowest and feeblest type of reason, poor, purblind, fettered, faltering human nature. "O ye sun and moon ! O ye stars of heaven ! O ye mountains and hills ! O ye seas and floods ! O ye whales and all that move in the waters ! O ye fowls of the air ! O all ye beasts and cattle ! O ye children of men ! Bless ye the Lord ; praise him and magnify him for ever !" Thus far the deist—"the diapason closing full in man !"

But the Christian takes up a far nobler strain. With *him* all angels cry aloud ; the heavens and all their "Mighties" (according to the fine old Saxon rendering of our venerated "Te Deum") to the loud uplifted trumpets of the "bright seraphim in burning row." And with all these are associated the glorious company of the apostles, the goodly fellowship of the prophets, the noble army of martyrs, the Holy Church throughout all the world—men only, it must be allowed, but men of earth's best and purest, whose whole lives were one practical rehearsal of this coronation anthem, and who would necessarily throw into it an intellect sublimed and sanctified and energized by the power of the Holy Ghost, a power unrecognised in the starved and starving creed of the deist.

Another thought that strikes us in contemplating this great subject, is—

III. THE PRE-EMINENCE OF CHRIST. He is the sun, the centre, the circumference, the beginning, and the ending of this majestic congress. God's exhaustive definition of all spiritual blessings in heavenly places and things is

simply "Christ." "In Him, even in him," all find their climax and consummation. Taking the world as it now is, how must it be filled with wonder that this grand event should bear almost exclusively on Him whose name is by common consent ignored by all! All our so-called great men in science, philosophy, theology, literature, and politics—men of advanced opinions in every department—philanthropists of wide sympathies, even educationalists of large-hearted liberality—every one, in fact, who, whilst he advocates reform and progress in its multiform developments, politely expurgates the Bible, and knows nothing of Him in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All these must have looked for something very different, when the ages should be thus gathered together, to present the harvest of their achievements at the altar of the great Father of Lights. But God looks upon nothing as really great and glorious that is not saturated with the spirit of Christianity, and brought to bear directly and entirely on the mediation and merits of Christ Jesus. That very name, indeed, which the advocates of moral respectability and the directors of the public mind most scrupulously avoid, as one which it would be a scandal to introduce into our literature, our scientific discussions, our philanthropic movements, and our popular discussions and appeals, is here, exalted above every other name, and made to kindle with its glory this grandest of all grand gatherings.

But is the Church much wiser than the world? Is Christ universally acknowledged *there*? Are there not thousands of professing Christians, who, so far from determining to know nothing but Him, and Him crucified, are indifferent to the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his sufferings, the transforming assimilation to his life? Heterodox men we know there are who deny the Lord that bought them—men who are content to see in Him virtue incarnate, but not the fulness of the Godhead bodily—men who, after they have been known of Him, turn back again to the beggarly elements of formalism—men who overlay all that is essentially

great and God-like, with their own littlenesses and mistakes—men, by whom He is divided and apportioned with Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and the rest; but in the very heart and stronghold of so-called orthodoxy, are there not those who would rob Him of his worship, and tell us we are never to draw near to Him in prayer? Woe worth the day when dignitaries of the Church of England so fill up the measure of their hypocrisy, and, after years spent in calling publicly on Christ as the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, discover that they have been under a mistake, and write hymns to God, from which that name which can alone render them acceptable, is scrupulously eliminated!

But no wonder, if instead of drawing their inspiration from the Holy One, through whose anointing we know all things, they are content to seek it from a poor Zulu Kaffir unnaturally precocious in the rule of three! Another thought is—

IV. THE WONDERFUL GATHERING. It includes “all things, both which are in heaven and which are on earth”; the converts from Judaism—they who first trusted in Christ; and the Gentiles, who were some time alienated and enemies, but having believed, were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

First: *All things which are in heaven.* We know not how, or how far, these other worlds, these “things in heaven” may be interested in the grand scheme of redemption, but the fact seems certain. Doubtless there is much that the angels desire to look into, as, in silent and acquiescent wonder, they minister in the work of salvation. The great mystery of Godliness is, we know, a mystery to them, but how deep, how vitally influential or important, we cannot tell. When we look at what Paul says to the Colossians, on the same subject, we are struck by his use of the term “reconciliation.” “It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell: and (having made peace through the blood of his cross) by him to *reconcile* all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in

heaven." But the expression does not necessarily shut us up to the conclusion that any of the heavenly intelligences have been alienated like ourselves. God's dealings with us, both in providence and grace, are full of mysteries—of mysteries which in the great minds of angelic and archangelic natures, must excite conflicting thoughts, intense and painful in proportion to their magnitude and to the scope and capacities of the gigantic minds they influence, which are to find solution only in the Fulness of Times.

There is something overpoweringly sublime in this thought. Worlds on worlds, systems upon systems, all concentrating their gaze on this development of God's scheme, waiting to witness the admission of fallen humanity to its premised inheritance, and though as yet they see through a glass darkly, looking in implicit love and deepest adoration for the dawning of this great Day of Restitution, when every shadow of conflict and perplexity shall have passed away, and they shall know, even as they are known.

Second: *The Jewish Church occupies a prominent place.* "We also," "ye also," "and you." These expressions open the little episodes relating to the Jew and Gentile Churches, as if only by an afterthought they were included in the great Congress. And yet, in our small minds, we often make our own peculiar section of the Church the be-all and the end-all of our creed. Not so the mighty God, who, when He calls together his saints from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, knows them but by one name—"those who have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." By one offering all have been perfected.

The place of honour is assigned to the Jew—"that *we* should be to the praise of his glory, who *first* trusted in Christ." God's glory in the work of redemption is illustrated and advanced by the praise attendant upon this accession to the Church. To be the *first*, the pioneer in almost any movement, is an honour; to tempt the ocean; to enter upon new territory, to lead to battle, to set up a kingdom, to found a family, to initiate, in fact, any undertaking,

signalises those who achieve such things. And the more arduous, the more honourable. Here is the Jew, nursed in formalism, righteous by rule and measure, clinging with almost preternatural fondness to heaven-born, but lapsed institutions—laying grievous burthens on himself, and others, in order to establish a claim to the Divine favour, Pharasaic beyond his own straitest Pharisaism, and clinging with a grasp, death-like but hopeful, to the inexorable demand, "This do, and thou shalt live!" Look at such a man, and then think of *his* breaking through these trammels, and throwing himself implicitly on the free grace of Jesus! Were not the Abana and Pharpar of his cherished rites and ceremonies better than all the waters of Jordan? Could he not wash in *them*, and be clean? It were scarcely to be wondered at that so often and so generally the poor Jew should turn and go away in a rage. Yet, in the simple, but exhaustive, language of our text, he *trusts*. Oh what a trust was that! So it is also, but under somewhat different conditions, with

Third: *The Gentile Church*. "Ye also trusted." But to *them* "faith came by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The message was to them new and incisive. It was the good word of salvation falling on the ears of those who had been nursed and nurtured in other creeds, and were crying out for clearer light, and more definite direction. "Wherewithal shall I come before the Lord, or bow myself before the Most High God?" Not so the Jew: the ordinances and the covenants, and the promises, had long been his; but he lay indolently entrenched behind his ancestral boast—"We be Abraham's seed." He halted halfway, and saw not Jesus as the end of the law for righteousness, till this spirit of trust was given him, and he ventured wholly on the Saviour.

And now, let us, in conclusion, give a more personal and practical bearing to the subject. What is the *attitude* of the true believer? "He first trusted." In what? In the power and promise of Christ, as Doddridge beautifully para-

phrases it. The marginal reading scarcely covers the whole idea: he first 'hoped' in Christ. He did so, but he did more. Hope ripens unto faith, a childlike clinging trust in Jesus as his all. Groping in the twilight of his first yearnings after Him, whom having not seen, he loved—he felt at last his hand, and followed his leadings, though the way was rough and it cost him the loss of all things. But he "trusted," and so must we, to whom the lines have fallen in pleasant places, singing as we go—

"Since the dear hour that brought me to Thy foot,
And cut up all my follies by the root,
I never trusted in an arm but Thine,
Nor hoped but in Thy righteousness divine.
My prayers and alms, imperfect and defiled,
Were but the feeble efforts of a child;
Howe'er performed, this was their brightest part,
That they proceeded from a grateful heart.
Cleansed in Thine own all-purifying blood,
Forgive their evil and accept their good;
I cast them at Thy feet, my only plea,
Is what it was—dependence upon Thee."

DOUGLAS ALLPORT.



FURY OF GUILT.

"That I grieve, that's true;
But 'tis a grief of fury, not despair;
And if a manly drop or two fall down,
It scalds along my cheeks like the green wood,
That, sputtering in the flame, works outward
Into tears."
DRYDEN.

PUNISHMENT OF GUILT.

"When haughty guilt exults with impious joy,
Mistake shall blast, or accident destroy;
Weak man with erring rage may throw the dart,
But Heaven shall guide it to the guilty heart."
JOHNSON.

A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of their widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

SUBJECT: *Paul at Cæsarea before Agrippa.*

"And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came unto Cæsarea to salute Festus," &c., &c.—Acts xxv. 13—27, xxvi. 1—30.

THESE verses record Paul's *fifth* defence of himself and his religion. His appeal to Cæsar, chapter xxv. 12, put an end to all judicial process against him, both in the Jewish and Roman Courts of Palestine. Notwithstanding, by what appears to human eyes a mere fortuitous circumstance, namely, the arrival of Agrippa at Cæsarea (ver. 13.), another opportunity of self-defence and appeal to his own nation is afforded, and his appearance on the occasion forms one of his most characteristic and eloquent apologies. The narrative before us, including fourteen verses of the 25th chapter and the whole of the 26th, divides itself into two sections: *Paul's introduction to Agrippa—and his defence before Agrippa.*

I. PAUL'S INTRODUCTION TO AGRIPPA. Before we notice Paul's introduction to Agrippa, we must say a passing word about the king, and his visit to Cæsarea. This Agrippa was the son of Herod Agrippa, who died at Cæsarea (chap. xii. 23), and the grandson of Herod the Great. He was seventeen years of age at his father's decease, and through the favour of Claudius Cæsar, was appointed king of Chalcis, and afterwards promoted to a wider dominion, which was still further increased under Nero. In the New Testament history, we find a Herod on the throne no less than three times. This

Herod is represented by Josephus as a zealous Jew, although not regarded by the Jews with much affection or respect on account of his heathen education and equivocal position between Jews and Gentiles. The incestuous marriages for which the Herods were proverbial, is said to have an example in the case of this Agrippa and his eldest sister, Bernice, who now attended him to Cæsarea. On the king's visit to Cæsarea, in order "to salute Festus," Festus seizes the occasion to introduce the case of Paul to his notice. This introduction comprises two parts—

First : *His statement of the case to the king in the absence of Paul.* Here is the statement. "And when they had been there many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix : about whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against him. To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him. Therefore, when they were come hither, without any delay on the morrow, I sat on the judgment-seat, and commanded the man to be brought forth. Against whom when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed ; but had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters. But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Cæsar." Much of this is but a recapitulation of facts, recorded by Luke in preceding verses, and which we have already noticed. The fresh elements, however, are noteworthy. They are, (1) The reason he gives for not delivering Paul up at first to the Jews. "To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is

accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him." There is a discrepancy between the reason here given and that contained in the fourth verse. The reason Festus assigned why Paul should be kept at Cæsarea, was his own convenience. This discrepancy admits of two explanations. One is, that Luke omitted to record the answer of Festus to the Jews on that occasion and that he recorded only the personal inconvenience and not the political difficulty which is here mentioned. The other explanation is, that Festus now perpetrated a falsehood in his statement to Agrippa; that he reports to Agrippa not what he *did* say on that occasion, but what he *might* have said, or what, perhaps, he *ought* to have said. However, whether he made this reply or not, the reply itself bears an honourable testimony to that love of justice which distinguished the Roman rule. "It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him." The statement of the text is substantiated by other authors: thus Appian says, "It is not their custom to condemn men before they are heard." Philo says of the Roman prefects, "They yielded themselves to the common judges, hearing equally the accusers and defendants, condemning no man unheard, prejudging no man, but judging without favour or enmity, according to the nature of the case." Tacitus also remarks, that "a defendant is not to be prohibited from adducing all things by which his innocence may be established." The justice of such laws is happily exemplified in our own judicature. Another fresh element here is, (2) The disregard for the religious questions in dispute. The question which brought the Jews into such a violent and deadly antagonism to Paul was what Festus calls their "own superstition, and of one Jesus which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." The word *religion* would be better than "*superstition*" here, for it cannot be supposed that in speaking to Agrippa, who was a Jew, Festus would be so discourteous as to call his

religion a "superstition," in our sense of the word. Still of this religion, and this "one Jesus," Festus speaks with an air of manifest indifference. The whole seems to him to be unworthy of his notice. Of course, as a Roman judge, such religious questions were outside of his jurisdiction, but as a man they should have been regarded with a most vital concern. Another fresh element here is, (3) His motive for his desiring him to go to Jerusalem for trial. "And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I *asked him* whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters." In the ninth verse we hear him ask Paul the question, "Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me?" Here he gives the reason for putting such a question. It was his own difficulty on the point. "I doubted of such manner of questions," or as the margin has it, "I was doubtful how to inquire hereof."

Secondly : *The statement of the case to the king in the presence of Paul.* The result of the first statement of Festus was the desire on the king's part to hear Paul for himself. Consequently, the apostle is brought into his presence, and the circumstances of the interview were grand and imposing. "Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. To-morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him. And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp, and was entered into the place of hearing, with the chief captains and principal men of the city, at Festus' commandment Paul was brought forth." The cold-hearted voluptuary, for such was Agrippa, had his curiosity awakened, and was anxious to see a famous man, and to hear a strange story. Accordingly, Paul is brought into his presence. Bernice, who was first married to her uncle, Herod, the king of Chalcis, now lived criminally with her own brother Agrippa, was subsequently married to Polemon, king of Cilicia, afterwards deserted him, and returned to this Agrippa, subsequently lived in unholy union with the Emperor Vespasian, and with his son, Titus. This infamous woman,

worthy sister to the adulteress Drusilla, of whom we read in chapter xxiv., comes with Agrippa into court "*with great pomp.*" The chief captains,—chiliarchs, commanders of a thousand men, are there, and also the principal men of the city. The pomp, or, as the Greek is, the *phantasy*, was great to the eye of the sensuous and the thoughtless. It is worthy of notice that this parade of splendour was made almost on the very spot where Agrippa's father was a few years ago smitten by the angel, and devoured by worms, for the indulgence of a pride similar to that which Agrippa now exhibits. In the statement which Festus, in introducing Paul, now makes, he indicates two things—(1) His *personal* conviction in the matter. "And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and also here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. But when I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death, and that he himself hath appealed to Augustus, I have determined to send him." Here is a strong testimony to Paul's innocence. Festus had heard all that the Jews had to say against him, both at Jerusalem and at Cæsarea; he had seen and spoken to Paul himself; he had undoubtedly given much attention to the case, and here, in the open court of Cæsarea, he declares that he had found "nothing worthy of death," and that he had no "*certain thing*" of which to accuse him. This indicates (2) His official embarrassment. Festus was bound to send Paul to Rome, to the emperor, to be tried. Paul had demanded this, and the request he could not disregard, but in sending him to the chief authority, whom he calls "*my lord*," it was his duty to specify the crimes that he had committed. But crimes he could not find. "Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. Wherefore, I have brought him forth before you, and, specially, before thee, O king Agrippa, that, after examination, I might have somewhat to write. For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes *laid* against him." If Festus had

done his duty, and acquitted Paul, he need not have sent him to Rome, but now he was bound to send him to Rome, and here was his embarrassment. What was he to do? He was unable to report the case to Nero without criminating himself. His hope, therefore, was that something would come out before Agrippa that would solve the difficulty.

In the fragment of apostolic history thus noticed, we have four states of mind which have ever prevailed in men's minds in relation to the Gospel—

First : *Bitter antagonism*. This fired the Jewish people against Paul. They hated "the one Jesus whom Paul preached as having died and risen again." They could not bear the mention of his name. There are men now who hate Christianity, its advocates, and its disciples. The opposition, however, is as futile as it is malignant and wicked. The glorious cause of Paul has gone on and flourished, notwithstanding the fierce opposition of his contemporaries ; and so it will continue to do. The stone must smite the image.

Secondly : *Idle curiosity*. This is revealed in Agrippa. "I will also hear the man myself." Being a Jew, he could not have been ignorant of Paul's name, his history, or his cause, and now an opportunity occurred for him to see the man and hear his tale. He had no heart-interest in the matter ; it was mere idle curiosity. It would afford him and his profligate companion an hour's gratification. This spirit of curiosity in relation to the Gospel is still prevalent in the world.

Thirdly : *Proud indifference*. Festus felt no interest in this superstition, "this one Jesus who was dead, and whom Paul affirmed to be alive." Not he. Religious indifferentism is the prevalent sin of Christendom.

Fourthly : *Vital Faith*. Paul had a faith, that faith was in Christ, and that faith was his very life. To it he lived, and for it he was prepared to suffer and to die. "For me to live," he said, "is Christ, and to die is gain."

II. HIS DEFENCE BEFORE AGRIPPA. "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then

Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself," &c. (Acts xxvi. 1—30.) There, as in many other cases, the starting of a new chapter is uncalled for and incorrect. The conclusion of the preceding chapter and the whole of this is the history of facts which occurred in the same day, and perhaps in the same hour, and which are vitally connected. Where, then, is the reason for a new chapter? This chapter leads us to notice three things—*The opportunity afforded for his defence, the substantial parts of his defence, and the immediate influence of his defence.*

(To be continued.)

Germ of Thought.

SUBJECT: *A Wonderful and an Alarming Fact.*

"My Spirit shall not always strive with man."—Gen. vi. 3.

Analysis of Homily the Seven Hundred and Sixty-Third.

WE have here—

I. A WONDERFUL FACT IMPLIED. The Holy Spirit strives with man. He who brooded over the chaotic mass, and out of it brought cosmos in all its beauty, is still brooding over immortal minds where darkness and confusion dwell, and educing moral beauty—a new creation. In antediluvian times, in the patriarchal and prophetic ages, as well as in the Gospel day, the Spirit has been striving. The noble Stephen, in his memorable defence before the Sanhedrim, abruptly breaks out with the daring charge, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye." Christ said, "He," the Holy Spirit) "shall convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." Here observe—

First: *Remarkable human power.* The Holy Spirit strives, implying man's resistance. He who speaks in heaven, and myriads of intelligent beings fly at his command, who speaks to the mighty ponderous orbs, and they roll along in their

respective paths, who speaks to surging ocean, and its foaming billows cease to roll—speaks to man, but he *refuses to obey*. Man's power in this respect is astounding. He who created inanimate matter, impressed upon it certain wise laws, and it obeys them. It is incapable of resistance. To the animal creation He gave certain instincts, and it acts in accordance with them. To man He gives reason, conscience, will, and leaves him perfectly free—to choose or to refuse, to obey or to disobey. He uses no compulsion. He who denies the freedom of the human will, converts man into a machine, and naturally denies his responsibility to God. The Scriptures declare that God calls, but man refuses, stretches out his hand, but man disregards, &c. Observe—

Secondly: *Amazing divine condescension*. Who is it that strives? Is it an inferior that entreats thee to act aright? Is it thy equal, thy companion, thy brother? Nay, thy Creator, the Almighty, the Governor of the universe. It is He who gently strives, craves a place in thy affections, &c. Wonderful condescension! If such a request came from an earthly monarch, many would consider it such condescension as might form a topic for a lifetime of conversation, &c. Observe—

Thirdly: *Astounding human obduracy*. One would suppose that man would be ready to yield to the Divine Spirit, spread his sails to catch the celestial breezes, cherish every influence, and anxiously cry, "Depart not thou from us!" but the history of past ages, and of our contemporaries, proves the contrary. The Holy Spirit with wonderful patience strives with man; the human heart, harder than granite, resists the holy influences of heaven, and remains shut against God and his truth. Man grows up amid religious privileges—Bibles, sanctuaries, and ordinances; he has the eternal truth enforced upon his attention; his reason and conscience tell him that it is right that he should obey; the Spirit, like the gentle rain upon the thirsty soil, moves upon his mind; but it is often to no purpose. He is like a portion of rocky land, on which though rains descend and

dews distil, the agriculturist casts his seed in vain. He breasts the billows of divine influence, and in the hardness of his heart not unfrequently says, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." How astounding the obduracy that thus resists Almighty love! What power shall break the adamant, melt the icy heart, enlighten the midnight gloom, and cleanse away the moral pollution? Manifestly the Holy Spirit, and yet infatuated man resists the Spirit. Observe—

Fourthly: *A merciful reason.* Why does He strive with man? Why not abandon him? He is anxious to be left alone, to follow out his own purposes without being disturbed. Why does not the Holy Spirit grant him his desire? There is a merciful reason, my brother. Could I fathom and express to you the infinitude of divine love, I would show you clearly. Why does not that father abandon that boy of his, who rebels against his authority, whose conduct has so often grieved him, who has mixed with evil associates, and brought disgrace upon the family name? Why does he not give him up? He can do without him. Behold the quivering of that father's lips; see those tears that start to his eyes when he thinks of his boy: hear those fervent prayers of his; listen to him in the agony of his spirit groaning before God; and tell us the reason. Ah! he has a father's heart—a parent's love. Many are surprised that his interest and hope for his boy should remain so strong; but parental affection is more than an answer. Shall we compare the small drop of love in the human parent's heart with the boundless ocean of divine love? Shall we compare the finite with the infinite? The boundless ocean of divine love—the yearnings of the Everlasting Father towards his rebellious children—this, this is the reason. "O, Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee," &c. Observe—

Fifthly: *The benevolent purpose.* What is the object of his striving? Why does He convince of guilt, show the excellency of righteousness, and cause a fear of retribution? Undoubtedly, that man may forsake sin, [and attain to

righteousness. Sin being the cause of our ruin, having made a miserable wreck of us, being the abominable thing "which God hates," all the redeeming agencies at work on earth are for the putting away of sin. For this purpose Christ came "to destroy the work of the devil"; He was manifested to take away sin. "A fountain is opened in the house of David," &c. The Gospel is a grand remedy for the removal of sin. The preacher's duty is to lift up his voice against sin. The Holy Spirit convinces of sin and righteousness, in order that man may forsake the one, and attain to the other. The benevolent purpose of the Spirit with you, my brother, is to lead you to forsake your sins; to consecrate yourself a living sacrifice unto God; and to grasp the proffered mercy. A more benevolent purpose can scarcely be conceived. Observe—

Sixthly: *The mysterious method.* How does the Spirit strive? Though we cannot fully understand the way by which spirit influences spirit without vocal organs, human experience and revealed truth teach us the reality of such operations. We do not fully comprehend the way in which our own spirits influence our bodies; but the reality of that influence we readily admit. The movement of the hand, the eye, the head, seems to be instantaneous with the volition of the human soul. The mysteriousness of the method of operation of the Divine Spirit was taught by Jesus. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and ye hear the sound thereof," &c. Now you have the pleasant, gentle breeze, slightly moving the leaves of the trees, stirring a few ripples on the surface of the lake; then you have the tremendous hurricane levelling vast forest trees, lashing the ocean into mighty billows, and stirring the lake to its very depths. Can you in either case say, "Whence it cometh, or whither it goeth"? So in the operation of the Holy Spirit upon the human mind. Sometimes it is the silent distilling of the dew, the gentle breeze, "the still small voice," leading the mind to contemplation, melting the heart, inciting to humility and confession, to love and

trust. Again, in trumpet tones the voice is heard; the loud blast shakes man's being to its centre; mental perturbation, internal commotion succeeds, and in agony of distress he cries, "What shall I do to be saved?" Though the method of operation in both cases is mysterious, the final result is the same: "Peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby." Though its operation on the human mind may be direct, striking conviction, independently of man's senses, it operates in connection with the truth, "Takes of the things which are Christ's," &c. Peter and others preached the Gospel, "With the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven."

II. AN ALARMING FACT STATED. The abandonment of the incorrigible, the cessation of divine influence, "My Spirit shall not always strive with man," There comes a period in man's history, if he resists the Holy Ghost, when he is abandoned by God, given over to a reprobate mind. "Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest." To the incorrigible the Almighty says, "I will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." "Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer," &c. Such are Bible statements; now look at Bible history. Saul hardened himself against Almighty goodness, and at last God deserted him. Then to his awful anguish he found that there was no answer to his prayer, prophet and priest had no revelation for him, and the mysterious urim no oracular response. Henceforth life—rather *existence*—was to him gloomy, foreboding, and miserable despair. The Jews bitterly opposed and persecuted goodness in the person of the Lord Jesus, and, shutting their eyes against the light of evidence, God abandoned them, and the sad wail of the Saviour was, "If thou hadst known, even thou at least in this thy day," &c. It is a solemn thought, and should be an alarming one, that there may be some living, daily partaking of God's bounties, with whom the Spirit has ceased to strive. Such a desertion is—

Firstly : *A calamity of awful magnitude.* What mind can conceive its magnitude? Or what tongue can express it? There was one mind that measured it, saw the awful depths, the profound abysses of misery of a God-forsaken soul, and in melting pity He burst into tears. "He beheld the city, and wept over it." The value and capabilities of a human soul He knew, and to save it gave his life. To be deserted by the Holy Spirit is to be irrecoverably lost—to be damned. Repentance and the religious life are impossible without the aid of the Holy Spirit, &c. The wreck of an estate is great, the wreck of an empire, the loss of its nationality, through the tyranny of an iron-hearted despot, is great (Poland, example); but the wreck of a planet, the greatest material wreck is nothing to the wreck of a soul. Such a desertion is—

Secondly : *A calamity most melancholy, terminating in despair.* Desertion is always melancholy. The deserted city, edifices crumbled to ruin, heaps of rubbish, fragments of glass, marble, and pottery; but not a man—how melancholy! The deserted temple, roof fallen in, portions of its walls broken down, once magnificent columns hastening to decay; no worshipper, no fervent prayer or holy song—how melancholy! To be deserted by a father, a mother, friends, society, names cast out as evil is sad; but no desertion is so melancholy as that of a soul abandoned by God. The heart designed for God, that cannot be happy without Him, forsaken by Him; that temple which should be consecrated to worship, and the presence of the eternal, forsaken, and hastening to decay—how melancholy!

Such desertion must end in despair. Sometimes despair is evident on earth, Saul, Judas, &c. The eternity will certainly be starless night, dark despair. On the black tempestuous ocean of futurity, no pilot, no refuge, no Saviour, no comforter, no God—hope dies, and *despair is born to live for ever.* "From hell there proceeds only the eternal thirst for an impossible death."

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PHILOS, B.A.

SUBJECT: *Christ "above all" as Teacher.*

"He that cometh from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony. He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."—John iii. 31—36.

Analysis of *Yomily the Seven Hundred and Sixty-Fourth.*

THESE verses set forth in the most striking and sublime manner the pre-eminence of Christ as the great Teacher of humanity. So exalted is the view here presented of Him as a Teacher, that some critics have concluded that the words could not have been the utterance of John the Baptist; that they transcend his conception of the Messiah. With such a conclusion we cannot agree, for elsewhere the views of the Baptist concerning the Messiah chime in with those set forth in the text. (Luke i. 29, &c.) As the Teacher of humanity, Christ is "ABOVE ALL." The text teaches—

I. That as a Teacher He is "*above all*" in the SUBLIMITY OF HIS ORIGIN. John speaks of Him as "He that cometh from above"—from heaven. All other teachers, from Enoch down to Malachi, were "of the earth." They came into existence in the natural order of generation, offspring of depraved parents, receiving from earliest childhood a bias to error and to wrong, and though called in their manhood by God to the high office of teaching, they never lost entirely their *earthliness*. On the contrary, Christ came down from the pure heavens of God, from regions free from all ignorance and error. He had a pre-incarnate existence. (Prov. viii.; John i.) He saw God. He lived with God. He communed with God. "He was in the bosom of the Father." During his existence here He received no taint of moral earthliness. Whilst here, He was morally "*above all*." The text teaches—

II. That as a Teacher He is "*above all*" in the CHARACTER OF HIS DOCTRINES. What does He teach? The passage replies—

First: *Realities of which He Himself was conscious.* He teaches that which "He hath seen and heard." That which to Him was not a matter of speculation, but of experience, consciousness. What had Christ "seen and heard"? Ah, what? What are all the forms and voices of eternal truth?

Secondly: *Realities which were moral in their influence upon his hearers.* We use the word *moral* here to signify that which stands opposed to that which is irresistible in its influence. Mathematical truths are irresistible. They force their way into man's conviction irrespective of his choice. Not so with the truths which Christ presented. Some did not accept his doctrines. "No man (comparatively few) receiveth his testimony." He spoke eternal realities. But through the pride, prejudice, and the carnality of his hearers, they were rejected. Some, on the contrary, believed. "He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true." When his truths are received in faith, the receiver of them is assured in his own consciousness that "God is true." Christ's doctrines are so congruous with man's sense of right, consciousness of need, feeling of God, a desire for immortality, that the believing soul sees them as Divine reality, admits no more reasoning against them.

Thirdly: *Realities which were pre-eminently divine.* "He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God." The realities are concerning God Himself, his words, his very thoughts, feelings, purposes. Christ does not teach what men call *sciences*; but God Himself, the Root and Branch, the Centre and Circumference of all Truth. The text teaches—

III. That as a Teacher He is "*above all*" in the AFFECTION OF HIS FATHER. "The Father loveth the Son."

First: *No Teacher shared so much of the divine love as Christ did.* The Father loveth all. He is love. All the true teachers of the world participate in his affection, but He

loveth the Son *pre-eminently*. He is his "well-beloved Son." He loves Him with an infinite complacency, because He is his well-beloved Son. He says to the world, "*Hear ye him.*"

Secondly: *No Teacher deserved so much of the divine love as Christ did.* He never offended the Father in his conduct. He never misrepresented the Father either in his spirit, or in his teaching. "He did no sin, neither was guile found in his lips."

Thirdly: *No Teacher had such demonstrations of divine love as Christ did.* "He hath given all things into his hands"—the administration of all spiritual blessings; all authority over souls. The text teaches—

IV. That as a Teacher He is "*above all*" in the EXTENT OF HIS ENDOWMENTS. "For God giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto Him.*" The other inspired teachers had the Spirit in a limited degree. But Christ had that Spirit *fully*. "It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." That Christ was thus fully endowed with the Divine Spirit is clear from the fact that "He knew what was in men," and also from the stupendous miracles He performed. But that He had *more* of the Divine Spirit than any of the old prophets had, is manifest by comparing—

First: *Their theology with His.* How narrow, material, and one-sided their views of God often appear to be as compared with Christ's! Their God seemed no more to them at times than a local passionate divinity. Christ's God was an *infinite* Spirit and a *loving* Father. By comparing—

Secondly: *Their spirit with His.* They shun sinners and pray for their destruction. "Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more." Language breathing this spirit frequently occurs in their address. Christ loved his enemies, mingled with sinners, came to call them to repentance. By comparing—

Thirdly: *Their lives with His.* The best of them often displayed great moral infirmities. Moses lost his temper, Elijah lost heart in duty. David fell into carnality, Jeremiah grew

sulky, saying, "I will speak no more in thy name." But through the whole life of Christ not a shadow of defect. He challenged his enemies to convince Him of sin. The text teaches—

V. That as a Teacher, He is "*above all*," in the NECESSITY OF HIS MISSION. Faith in Him is *essential* to man's eternal well-being. "He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." Here are suggested two points which shows Christ's pre-eminence as a Teacher above all others:—

First: *The faith which He requires as a teacher is faith IN HIM.* It is not merely faith in the facts of his history, or in the truth of his propositions, but *in Himself* as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. We are not called upon to put unbounded trust in the character even of inspired teachers. Nowhere are they held up as an example. Indeed, were we to trust even in the best of them we should be ruined.

Secondly: *Faith IN HIM determines the destiny of the soul.* Those that believe *in Him* "hath everlasting life," *i.e.*, life without any evil, in connection with all good, and life without end—"everlasting life." *Hath* it, not shall have. They that believe in Him *hath* this life now. "*This is life eternal*," &c. Heaven is not something then and yonder, but now and here. What of those that believe not? "The wrath of God abideth on them." *Wrath* in God is not like wrath in man, passion, revenge, malignity. It is opposition to all that is false, unjust, irreverent, malignant, wicked, in his universe. God is against bad men as the burning sun is against the burglar and the assassin, checking, baffling, exposing, and confounding them.

CONCLUSION. Christ is our moral master, God is not mocked.



SUBJECT : *The Lessons of a Day.*

"The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar."—
Gen. xix. 23.

Analysis of *Homily the Seven Hundred and Sixty-Fifth.*

THE sun "rises and sets," and a day is gone from the life of mortals. Who knows the full worth and understands the whole history of a day? God alone. How much of human life comes and goes in a day? Every new day is the turning over of a new leaf in the great book of Providence, and reveals fresh lessons to men. What lessons did this new day bring to Lot? Let us glance at a few. This day would teach him—

I. THE ABSURDITY OF LETTING SECULAR MOTIVES GOVERN MEN'S CONDUCT. Why did Lot take up his residence in Sodom? Was it in order to serve God, and to be spiritually useful to his children and his race? No, but because he thought it a *secularly* desirable residence. "And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan that it was well watered everywhere," &c. (Gen. xiii. 10.) He went there, and there his own piety was injured, his own children contaminated, and there the partner of his own bosom became a victim of divine judgment. The beauty of his home was his curse. The spirit of Lot is still common. There are those even amongst professing Christians who select their residences, not because they will conduce to the spiritual advantage either of themselves or their children, but because they will add to their secular comfort and respectability. The idea of a magnificent building, fine rooms, showy lawns, exerts more influence on them than all the ideas connected with the obligation of public worship, and the means of spiritual usefulness. Lot would deeply feel the folly and also the wickedness of this as he saw the cities in flames. This day would teach him—

II. THE INCONGRUITY BETWEEN THE PHYSICAL AND MORAL SCENERY OF THE WORLD. Sodom seems to have been a beautiful spot. There rose the hill and expanded the fertile

mead. There the trees clustered with fruit and the flowers opened in beauty. The limpid stream, the quiet lake, the hill and dale with their variegated beauty were there ; but look at the men. "They were wicked, and sinners before the Lord exceedingly." (Gen. xiii. 13.) So it has ever been since the Fall. "Every prospect pleases, and only man is vile." This incongruity between the outward scenery and the moral character of the inhabitants suggests three thoughts—First : *The abnormal state of human society.* This cannot be according to the original plan of God. It suggests—Secondly : *The necessity of a retributive period.* Under the government of a just God, it cannot always go on thus. The bad will not always have the best places. The time will come when every man will, like Judas, "go to his own place." It suggests—Thirdly : *That a man's external circumstances are no true signs of character.* 'This day would teach him—

III. THE TREMENDOUS FORCE OF OLD ASSOCIATIONS. He had no idea, perhaps, until now what a hold Sodom had obtained upon the sympathies of himself, his wife, and his children. On account of this his sons-in-law despised his warning voice, for he seemed as "one that mocked" unto them. On account of this his wife looked back and she was smitten with the sword of justice, and became a warning to posterity. On account of this he himself lingered on the doomed spot until angels forced him away. Greatly are we all influenced by this power of association. The place where we received our existence, where we played in childhood's happy days, where the mind first opened its eyes on this beautiful world, where youthful desires awoke in their poetry, where youthful purposes were formed, where youthful hopes were kindled, and where, too, we laboured in the strength of manhood, ties us to it as by some mystic chain. Several elements of association perhaps Lot felt. The *local*, the mere charm of place. The *social*, old friends and companions. The *secular*, his property was there. Association now keeps men from God. Men's sympathies get so tied to old scenes, customs,

friends, that they find it all but impossible "to come out from amongst them." This day would teach him—

IV. THE FUTILITY OF HUMAN REASONING CONCERNING THE WAYS OF GOD. He would now think of many in Sodom who, when the warning of its destruction was given, argued from the established order and appearance of things, the high improbability of such a catastrophe. Because the stars perhaps gleamed that night as brightly as ever, the wind breathed as softly, and all nature seemed as undisturbed as ever, they concluded that the man was a brainless fanatic who talked of a storm of fire. Still, despite their reasoning, the storm came. Let us not be guided by our own conclusions, the Word of God is our only guide. God's Word is more settled than what are called the laws of nature. (1.) God *may* deviate from the laws of nature; He cannot from his Word. (2.) God *has* deviated from the laws of nature; He has never from his Word. Red Sea, Jordan, &c. This day would teach him—

V. THE DETERMINED ANTAGONISM OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT TO SIN. "And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground." (Gen. xix. 25.) Sin will not go unpunished. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap," &c.

Biblical Criticism.

By Rev. CHARLES WILLS, M.A.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.—EMENDATIVE RENDERINGS.

Chap. xxvii. 1.— *both* Paul and certain other prisoners to a centurion, by name Julius, of the *Augustan cohort*. 2. And *embarking in an Adramyttian ship, that was going to sail to the places along Asia, we put to sea, there*

being with us Aristarchus, a Macedonian, a *Thessalonian*. 3. And on the *following* day we ran into Sidon. And Julius, *humanely* treating Paul, *permitted* him to go to his friends to *receive attentions*. 4. And having *departed* thence, &c. 6. an *Alexandrine* ship, sailing to Italy, he *put us on board of her*. 7. . . . and scarcely *reaching* against Cnidus, &c. 8. And hardly *sailing by* it, we came to a certain place called Fair Havens, nigh to which was the city Lasaea. 10. that the voyage is on the point of being with hurt and much loss, not only of the cargo and the ship, &c. 12. And the haven not being [*ὑπαρχοντος*] convenient, if by any means they might, *reaching* to Phoenice, winter [there], a haven of Crete, *looking according to* the south-west and *according to* the north-west. 13. [*ασσων*, not a proper name, but an adverb.] 14. But not long after, there *rushed down* it a *whirling* wind called [Codex Sinaiticus has *εὐρακύνων*, so Lachmann and James Smith.] 15. But the ship *being caught*, and *unable to eye* the wind, *giving* [her] up, we *were drifted*. 16. we *were scarcely able to get at and master* the boat. 17. . . . and fearing lest they should fall away on to the quicksand, having *lowered* the gear, were thus *drifted*. 18. they *did a casting out*. 20. all hope that we should be saved was *finally* taken away. 21. And after long *fasting*, ye should have been *guided by* me, and not have loosed from Crete, and have *been spared* this hurt and loss. 23. an angel, &c. and whom I *worship* [*λατρεῖω*]. 25. . . . for I trust God, that thus it shall be according as it has been spoken to me. 26. But we must *fall away on to* a certain island. 27. And when the fourteenth night *came*, we *being driven about* in the Adria, about midnight the shipmen *surmised* that some land was *nearing them*. 29. And fearing lest we should *fall away upon breakers*, &c., and wished day to come. 30. And the shipmen *seeking* to flee out of the ship, and *having let down* the boat into the sea, *in pretence as if going to extend* anchors out of the *pro*w, 31. ye [emphatic], &c. 33. And while day was coming on, Paul was *beseeking* all to *partake*

of food, saying, *To-day is the fourteenth day that ye have waited, continuing fasting, having partaken of nothing.* 34. Wherefore I beseech you to *partake of food, for this belongs to your salvation: for there shall not a hair perish from the head of one of you.* 36. Then all, *becoming of good cheer, themselves also partook of food.* 38. And when they were full of food, they lightened the ship by casting out, &c. 39. And when day came, they did not recognise the land: but they observed an inlet with a strand, into which they designed if they could, to drive the ship forward. 40. And having cut away the anchors, they left [her] to the sea, at the same time loosing the lashings of the helms: and hoisting the foresail to the wind made for the strand. 41. And falling into a place of two seas, they ran the ship aground, and the prow sticking fast remained unshakeable, but the after part was severed by the shock. 42. And a design arose of the soldiers to kill the prisoners, lest any should escape by swimming out. 43. But the centurion, designing to bring Paul safe through, hindered them from the design, and commanded them that could swim to throw themselves off first and get away on to the land: 44. And the rest, some on planks, some on pieces of the ship. And thus it came to pass that all were brought safe through on to the land.

Chap. xxviii. 1.—And having been brought safe through, then we recognised that the island was called Melite. 2. And the barbarians afforded us uncommon philanthropy: &c. 3. And Paul having collected a heap of dry sticks, and laid them on the fire, a viper, coming out from the heat, fastened on his hand. 4. And when the barbarians saw the beast hanging on his hand, they said to each other, Doubtless this man is a murderer, whom, although brought safe through out of the sea, justice hath not suffered to live. 5. He then, having shaken off the beast into the fire, suffered no evil. 6. They then expected that he would swell from inflammation, or fall down suddenly dead; and expecting for a great while, and seeing nothing unusual coming to him, changing their minds, they said he was a god. 7. And in the neighbourhood of that place, estates belonged to the chief of the island, by

name Publius, who receiving us, three days kindly entertained [us]. 8. . . . of fever and of dysentery, &c. 9. And this being done, the rest also that had sicknesses in the island, came near and were healed. 10. . . . and when we sailed, supplied us with what was needful. 11. . . . we sailed in an Alexandrine ship, . . . with the sign of the Dioscuri. 13. Whence by coming roundabout we reached down against Rhegium; and after one day the south wind coming on, we came the second day to Puteoli. 15. And thence the brethren, having heard about us, came, &c. 16. And when we came into Rome, it was permitted to Paul, &c. 17. . . he called . . . I [emphatic], *Sirs* [*αὐτοὶ*] and brethren, having done nothing against the people or the customs of the fathers was delivered a prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans. 18. Who, having well examined me, designed to let me go, because there was no ground whatever of death in me. 19. . . . to call upon Cæsar . . . 20. On this ground then . . . I am hung around with this chain. 21. . . . nor came any [one] of the brethren near to announce or speak any evil concerning thee. 22. But we think it good to hear from thee the things which thou hast in mind; for indeed concerning this sect it is known to us, &c. 23. . . . there were come . . . to whom he set forth by fully witnessing the kingdom of God, and by persuading them concerning Jesus, both from the law of Moses and [from] the prophets, from early morning until evening. 24. And some were persuaded of what was said, and some disbelieved. 25. And being discordant among themselves they went away, Paul having said one word, . . . to your fathers, saying, 26. . . . and seeing ye shall see and not know. 27. For the heart of this people was made gross, and with [their] ears they heard dully, and their eyes they closed, &c. 28. . . . this salvation of God was sent to the heathen, and they [emphatic] will hear. 29.* 30. And he dwelt . . . in his own hired lodging, and received all that entered unto him. 31. . . . with all freedom, unhindered.

* This verse is wanting from the texts of Lachmann and Tischendorf, and also from the Codex Sinaiticus.

Wit in the Pulpit.

ON the use of wit and humour in preaching there is a greater variety of opinion. Some earnestly contend for the supposed propriety of applying ridicule and sarcasm to error and sin. If the question were with reference to general literature, or the style of a mere moralist, it might be differently regarded, since certain species of folly may be made to wither under the application of ridicule, and humour is very entertaining.

With reference to preaching the Gospel, however, the question arises on the score of congruity and propriety in their highest and gravest sense. In this view, the most that can be said in favour of wit and humour can only present them as very feeble auxiliaries to a Christian minister, whereas danger of gross impropriety attends their use. If, in deference to those rare examples of irony found in the Scriptures, it be conceded that humour may be occasionally employed, it must also be enjoined to keep it under rigid restraint. Some men are gifted with an extraordinary flow of humour, which without doubt may be disciplined and sanctified so as to become a talent of usefulness, when judiciously employed, even in the pulpit. But against its free indulgence or excessive use by ministers in any circumstances, distinct warnings should be uttered.

In all periods of the history of preaching the abuses of this faculty seem to have been more obvious than its uses. Hence it may be better to rest the case upon the testimony of good men rather than upon a theoretic argument.

"Ridicule," says Vinet, "shuts the soul to religious emotions. Moreover, it is a weapon that may be applied to good as well as to evil, and one which, if a minister uses, he is very likely to have with greater power turned against himself."

Dean Swift, in his letter to a young clergyman, throws a shaft of ridicule at the very practice in question. He says :

"I cannot forbear warning in the most earnest manner against endeavouring at wit in your sermons, because by the strictest computation it is very near a million to one that you have none, and because too many of your calling have made themselves everlastingly ridiculous by attempting it. I remember several young men in this town who could never leave the pulpit under half-a-dozen conceits, and this

faculty adhered to those gentlemen a longer or shorter time, exactly in proportion to their several degrees of dullness ; accordingly I am told that some of them retain it to this day. I heartily wish the brood were at an end."

Again, the use of wit tends to depreciate the estimate in which one's judgment is held, and consequently to lower the influence of the minister's personal character. Lord Kames is authority upon this point, although his remarks are general, and not designed for the present application. He says :

"Wit and judgment are seldom united. Wit consists chiefly in joining things by distant and fanciful relations, which surprise because they are unexpected. Such relations, being of the slightest kind, readily occur only to those who make every relation equally welcome. Wit upon that account is incompatible with solid judgment."

"Subjects really grave are by no means fit for ridicule." And yet those who ought to be grave ministers are tempted sometimes to indulge in ridicule because it excites laughter and the appearance of a momentary approbation. Campbell, author of the "Philosophy of Rhetoric," says :

"The effect designed by the pulpit, namely, the reformation of mankind, requires a certain seriousness which ought uniformly to be preserved by the preacher. His time, place, and occupation seem all incompatible with the levity of ridicule ; they (indeed) render jesting impertinence, and laughter, madness. Therefore, anything from the pulpit which might provoke this emotion would be deemed an unpardonable offence against both piety and decorum."

Edmondson, in his work on the Christian Ministry, says :

"Never aim at displays of wit in the pulpit. This might suit a buffoon, but ill becomes a grave minister of Jesus Christ. Triflers might like it well enough, but the deeply serious would be disgusted."

Baxter enters his solemn protest against witticism in the pulpit in these words :

"Of all preaching in the world that speaks not stark lies, I hate that which tendeth to make the hearers laugh, or to move their minds with tickling levity, and affect them as stage-players use to do, instead of affecting them with a holy reverence in the name of God."

The same evil, with some others, has been gibbeted in the immortal verse of Cowper :

"Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,
Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own—
Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
His master strokes, and draw from his design.
I would express him simple, grave, sincere :
In doctrine uncorrupt : in language plain,

And plain in manner ; decent, solemn, chaste,
 And natural in gesture ; much impressed
 Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
 And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
 May feel it too ; affectionate in look
 And tender in address, as well becomes
 A messenger of grace to guilty men.
 Behold the picture ! Is it like ? Like whom ?
 The things that mount the rostrum with a skip,
 And then skip down again ; pronounce a text ;
 Cry—hem ; and reading what they never wrote
 Just fifteen minutes, huddle up their work,
 And with a well-bred whisper close the scene !
 In man or woman, but far most in man,
 And most of all in man that ministers
 And serves the altar, in my soul I loathe
 All affectation. 'Tis my perfect scorn ;
 Object of my implacable disgust.
 What ! will a man play tricks, will he indulge
 A silly fond conceit of his fair form,
 And just proportion, fashionable mien,
 And pretty face, in presence of his God ?
 Or will he seek to dazzle me with tropes
 As with the diamond on his lily hand,
 And play his brilliant parts before my eyes
 When I am hungry for the bread of life ?
 He mocks his Maker, prostitutes and shames
 His noble office, and, instead of truth,
 Displaying his own beauty, starves his flock !
 Therefore, avaunt all attitude, and stare,
 And start theatric, practised at the glass !

* * * *

He that negotiates between God and man
 As God's ambassador, the grand concerns
 Of judgment and of mercy, should beware
 Of lightness in his speech. 'Tis pitiful
 To court a grin when you should woo a soul ;
 To break a jest, when pity would inspire
 Pathetic exhortation ; and to address
 The skittish fancy with facetious tales
 When sent with God's commission to the heart !
 So did not Paul. Direct me to a quip
 Or merry turn in all he ever wrote,
 And I consent you take it for your text,
 Your only one, till sides and benches fail.
 No : he was serious in a serious cause,
 And understood too well the weighty terms
 That he had taken in charge. He would not stoop
 To conquer those by jocular exploits
 Whom truth and soberness assail'd in vain."

D. P. KIDDER, D.D.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

THE SHILOH, OR THE WORLD'S TRANQUILLIZER.

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."—Gen. xlix. 10.

THIS is one of the sublime, prophetic utterances of Jacob to his children on his death-bed. "And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you *that* which shall befall you in the last days." (Gen. xlix. 1.) There are terms in the verse that require at the outset an explanatory observation. Although the word "*sceptre*" is used with considerable latitude by the sacred writers, ancient versions and modern critics generally agree in affixing to it the sense of *rule*, of authority. The sceptre we take, therefore, as the symbol of sovereign power. The word "*lawgiver*" is generally regarded as a collective term for the teachers of the law and not law makers, for the Jews had none such. The word, therefore, represents those priests and Levites among the Jews whose duty it was to instruct in the law. The word "*Shiloh*," which signifies Tranquillizer, is sup-

posed by all acknowledged expositors to represent the Messiah, who is the Prince of Peace, whose work is reconciliation. The prediction contained in the verse seems to be this, that neither royal power, nor legal instructors should pass away from the tribe of Judah until the Messiah came, and when He came, He would become the great attraction to all the peoples of the world. Our subject is the fulfilled and fulfilling part of this prophecy concerning Christ.

I. THE FULFILLED PART of this prophecy concerning Christ. The *fulfilled* part involves three distinct facts.

First: *That Judah should have regal power.* There seemed but little probability of this fact, when this boy, with his eleven brothers, stood around his father's dying couch, and yet history shows that Judah became one of the greatest powers of the old world. Palestine was called by his name, "*Judæa*"; and so were its inhabitants "*Jews*." The reigns of David and of Solomon are examples of the power which Judah attained. Another fact included in this prediction is—

Secondly: *The continua-*

tion of this authority up to a certain time. Now it is an historical fact that the power of Judah did continue until the advent of Christ, and then departed. Though Judæa was made tributary to the Romans by Pompey, 63 B.C., it continued to be governed by princes of its own, and according to its own form of civil government, till after the birth of Christ, "in the days of Herod the king"; on the death of which tyrant, a year afterwards, we find his son and successor, Archelaus, proceeding to Rome to obtain the confirmation of his title to rule, which, after some delay and hesitation on the part of the Emperor, he at last receives, but with the title of *Ethnarch* only instead of king; and, on his being accused by his subjects of oppression, is deposed and banished in the tenth year of his reign, 11 A.D., Judæa was then annexed, with Samaria, to the province of Syria under the government of Publius Sulpitius Quirinius (the Cyrenius of Luke ii. 2), Coponius being made Procurator of Judea; to which office Pontius Pilate was appointed A.D. 26, and the enrolment mentioned by Luke ii. 1—4; the account of the government of Syria, iii. 1, 2; *the tribute to Cæsar*, Matt. xvii. 24—27; xxii. 17—21; and

the declaration of the chief priests, "We have no king but Cæsar (John xix. 15); an admission the more remarkable, as it was opposed to any ordinance—(Deut. xvii. 15)—against acknowledging an alien, or any one not of their own race as their prince; all sufficiently attest the complete subjection of the Jews to the Roman power, and that the sceptre having at least "departed from Judah," now was the time for the appearance of the Messiah. And, accordingly, we find it recorded, (Luke iii. 1—18) that it was "*in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar, Pontius Pilate being Governor of Judæa*, that our Lord was proclaimed by his forerunner, and received the witness of his Father and the Holy Spirit to his truth. Compare Luke iii. 1, 2, and 15, 17, with ver. 21, 22. It is impossible to imagine a more exact fulfilment of the prophecy of Jacob than was our Lord's manifestation at that precise time.

The *fulfilled* part of this prophecy shows two things—

First: *Man's power through God of foreseeing the future.* Some say that men cannot be made to foresee the future, but here is a fact. Here is a man whose mind on his death-bed was enabled to look on the winding stream of upwards of

sixteen centuries. What one did is not impossible for others.

Secondly : *God's character as the Governor of the world.* Here is his *faithfulness*, strictly adhering to his word through the sweep of ages. Here is his *almightiness*, so overruling the affairs of nations and of generations as to bring about to the very hour the facts he foretold.

II. THE FULFILLING PART of his prophecy. "Unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*." From the first hour of his life to the present day, Christ has been attracting men to Himself. When lying an infant in the manger, He attracted the wise men of the East from Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He that is born king of the Jews." During his public ministry on earth, great multitudes gathered about Him. Since his ascension to heaven from the day of Pentecost to this hour, thousands upon thousands have been gathering to Him. Fleeing to Him as doves to their windows. No being in the universe has such power to attract men as Christ. This will appear if you consider what are the highest attractions for souls—

First : *Self-sacrificing kindness attracts men.* A truly heroic deed, involving the risk of everything dear

to self, in order to serve men, is one of the most attractive elements. Was there ever such self-sacrifice as Christ's ? "He gave Himself," &c.

Secondly : *Marvellousness attracts men.* The *wonderful* has always the power to attract crowds ; men everywhere run to see the strange. Christ is the "Wonderful." Wonderful in birth, constitution, works, revelation, relations, influence.

Thirdly : *Promise of good attracts men.* Hold out a great good to the hope of a people, and they will run toward it with eager step. Who holds out such a good to the race as Christ ? In this life, a thousand fold, and in the world to come, everlasting life.

Fourthly : *Sublime grandeur attracts men.* The grand in scenery, the grand in art, the grand in social life, always exerts an attractive force upon souls. What grandeur is equal to that of Christ ? "The image of the invisible God, the brightness of his glory," &c., &c. There is, therefore, in Him what must, as He becomes more and more known, gather the peoples of the world to Him. This Shiloh is the great magnet of souls. No one else has ever as yet appeared to compete with Him in this magnetic power. Kings,

warriors, poets, artists, have appeared, have attracted the attention of the hour, but their influence has passed away. Is there any possibility of any one to come who shall compete with Christ? None at all. "Unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*."

THE LOSS OF HOPE, LIKE DEATH.

"Their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost."—Job. xi. 20.

HOPE is a state of mind always implying a supposed good, a future good, and a probable good. It is compounded of two elements, desire and expectation. It is not merely desire, for we desire many things which we cannot hope for. Nor is it expectation, for we expect things, such as infirmities of age, &c., that we do not hope for. Hope is a desirable expectation. The text implies three things. First: *That the "wicked" may have some great hope.* Zophar is speaking of the hope of the wicked. The hope, of course, is some *great* hope. All men have a host of little daily hopes, but there are in all minds at the same time one great dominant hope, engaging the purposes and stimulating the energies of life. "Hope," says Byron,

"Is the rainbow to the storms of life,
The evening beam that smiles the clouds away,
And tints to-morrow with prophetic day."

All have the hope of future happiness. The wicked have it. Their imaginations have painted a bright future, and their hearts long to reach it. Secondly: *The wicked will lose their great hope.* They will not realize the future they anticipate. A time will come when the vision of a bright future will pass from their hearts, and leave them in desolation and darkness. Thirdly: *The loss of the great hope of the wicked will be an event analogous to death itself.* "It shall be as the giving up of the ghost." Death is the giving up of the ghost—the dust returning to dust, the spirit to the God who gave it. What the soul is to the body, the dominant hope is to the soul—the inspirer of its energies, and the spring of its faculties. The loss of the dominant hope is like death in two respects.

I. IN RESPECT TO ITS PAINFULNESS. Death is a painful event. It is the disruption of the mystic ties that connect the soul with the body, and the body with the duties and the enjoyments of the outward universe. The pain is *mental* as well as *physical*. There is an instinctive recoil

from death. Human nature shudders at it the world over. But the pain of losing the great hope is in some respects greater than this. Which is the greater pain to a loving mother, her own death, or the death of all hope concerning the recovery of her only son, the object of her love, and the stay of her heart? David's great parental hope departs; and listen to his heart-breaking lament, "O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom!" &c. Which is the greatest agony to the sinner, the mere death of his body, the departure of his soul from his body, or the departure from his soul of all the hope that made his life pleasant, and even tolerable to him? Oh, the agony of the hour when the resistless hand of destiny hurls the sun of hope from the firmament of the soul, and leaves it in black despair. The loss of the dominant hope is like death—

II. IN RESPECT TO RUINOUSNESS. As the exit of the soul from the body ruins the body, the exit of hope from the soul ruins the soul. First: *In death the body loses all its enjoyments.* The eyes are closed to beauty, the ears to music—all sensibility is gone. When hope leaves the soul, all its joys are gone. "The setting of a great hope,"

says Longfellow, "is like the setting of the sun. The brightness of our life is gone, shadows of the evening fall around us, and the world seems but a dim reflection itself—a broader shadow." But when all hope is gone—"hope, the beautiful sun which colours all it shines upon"—what is there, then, in the soul but a shivering, howling, desolate midnight? Secondly: *In death the body loses all its beauty.* The most lovely frame soon becomes hideous after the departure of the spirit. "Give me a place that I may bury my dead out of my sight." But what a gloomy, ghastly, hideous wretch a spirit must be without hope. A soul without hope is a soul without love, and a soul without love is a soul destitute of every virtue, the cage of all the noxious reptiles of vice. Thirdly: *In death the body loses all its usefulness.* When the soul departs, the body can render no more service; the tongue of the orator, the pen of the author, the brush of the painter, the chisel of the sculptor, the tool of the workman, all silent and still for ever and for ever. When hope takes her exit from the soul, all the power of usefulness is gone. A mind under despair can render no service to the creation.

CONCLUSION: The grand concern of all men should be to get an *enduring* hope, a hope that shall last as long as the soul lasts. God knows that the most confiding and sanguine of us are losing some hopes every day. There are hopes that are like meteors in the sky of our being, they light us for the moment and are gone. Oh! for a great, grand, present hope. Where is it to be got? Nowhere but in Christianity. The hope of the Gospel is a "good hope;" good in its *object*, "an inheritance incorruptible," &c.; good in its *foundation*; the promise of a God who cannot lie; good in its *duration*. "God willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel," &c. "I have read our holy books," said a poor Hindoo. "I have long respected and invoked the name of my guardian deity. I have visited holy places. I have bathed in the Ganges. I have performed many rites. I have submitted to many sufferings; but I find no peace, no hope. Where, O where, am I going when I die? Into what new body is my soul to pass? Or into what dreadful gulf am I to be plunged? Die I must, but in death I can have no hope."

CHRISTIAN CONSCIOUSNESS AS A WITNESS.

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself."—1 John v. 10.

WE acquire knowledge by different witnesses. There is (1) the witness of the *senses*. Our physical senses assure us of certain facts external to ourselves. There is (2) the witness of *testimony*. All history is but a collection of human testimony regarding past events. Thus, too, we reach a knowledge of all scenes and circumstances that have not come within the range of our own observation. There is (3) the witness of *logic*. There is a class of truths, a species of knowledge which we reach by conclusions drawn from known facts. Thus mathematical, metaphysical, and ethical knowledge is chiefly, if not entirely, attained. There is (4) the witness of *consciousness*. Consciousness assures us of the *reality* of all our mental impulses and states. This consciousness is for many reasons the *best* witness, indeed, without this witness we should have no knowledge of anything like certitude. The text brings under our notice the *witness of Christian consciousness*. I offer three remarks concerning this witness.

I. IT IS THE MOST IM-

PORTANT OF ALL WITNESSES. Why is it the most important? Because it bears witness to the most *momentous* realities. I shall notice two great points which it attests to the soul's conviction. First: *The truth of the Gospel*. Fully acknowledging the value of other evidences in favour of Christianity, such as that of history, prophecy, miracle, and success, none are to be compared in value to that of consciousness. The existence, unity, holiness, and fatherhood of God; the depravity and guilt of humanity; the existence of a future state of retribution; the divinity of the person and work of Christ, such points as these, which constitute the very *essence* of the Gospel, are so congruous with the reason, instincts, needs, and aspirations of the soul, that consciousness sets its seal to them as divine. The Gospel "commends itself to every man's conscience." This is the witness that gives to the majority of believers in Christianity their faith. Secondly: *The soul's interest in the Gospel*. The man who believes, knows that he is the "child of God, and an heir of the kingdom of heaven." No other witness but that of consciousness can testify to these glorious realities. The Christian knows, not thinks, not

hopes, but *knows* in whom he has believed.

II. IT IS THE MOST INCON-
TROVERTIBLE OF ALL WIT-
NESSES. The evidence of the senses, which often deceive; of human testimony, which is fallible; of logic, which often errs, is all controvertible. Doubts may be raised at all the statements of these witnesses. But what consciousness attests is at once placed beyond argument, beyond debate, beyond doubt. It never lies, it never mistakes. Why do men believe in the existence of an external world?—in the being of a God?—in the freedom and responsibility of the soul?—in a coming retribution; logic has denied all these over and over again; it is because universal consciousness attests them. Systems, which consciousness cannot attest, have constantly appeared in the world, and often, too, with all the pomp and pageantry of philosophy and reasoning, but they pass as gorgeous clouds from the sky of thought. What consciousness attests, lives, despite the antagonism of all philosophy and logic. The verities attested by consciousness burn as imperishable stars in the mental hemisphere of the mind. Because consciousness attests the truth of Christianity, Christianity lives, and thrives, and spreads,

notwithstanding the opposition of scepticism, and the inconsistencies of churches. The true Christian may be confounded by sceptical reasoning, but he cannot be deprived of his faith. "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."

III. IT IS THE MOST AVAILABLE OF ALL WITNESSES. In some cases, logic, through the natural feebleness of the understanding, and, in other cases, through the lack of data, without which, however naturally strong, it cannot speak, is not always available, even with its feeble testimony. But the witness of consciousness is always in the court, and always prepared to give its decisive testimony. Subjective Christianity consists in hopes and fears, and loves and hates, in volitions, thoughts, aspirations; and these are all matters of consciousness. The availableness of the witness, it must be remembered, depends upon the *possession of personal Christianity*. If we have it not, consciousness cannot attest it. Brothers, have we this witness? If we have, we may well rejoice, for we are the children of God, delivered from the bondage and condemnation of sin, and brought into the enjoyment of the glorious liberty of the Gospel. When Franklin went out

into the thunderstorm to fly the kite, which was to test his theory of electricity, he was agitated by indescribable hopes and fears. But when the critical moment arrived and passed, when (quivering with trepidation) he applied his knuckle to the key, and the lightning flashed forth, then all doubt was at an end. Then he *felt* the truth of what before he had but believed. And the flashing of the light which reveals the truth of "God's word written" in the heart of a believing Christian, is as much more certain as it is more abiding. It is no transient phenomenon. It is a Paraclete that comes to abide with him for ever. It makes him a witness to whom God Himself appeals.* And the appeal is not in vain. It is answered from the depths of desolation and misery in the cry of the hoary patriarch, "I KNOW that my Redeemer liveth!" "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father!" "The spirit itself"—the Christian state of mind—"beareth witness with our spirit"—by con-

* Isa. xliii. 10—12; xlix. 8.

sciousness—"that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."

HUMAN HOLINESS THE GREAT OBJECT OF THE DIVINE WILL.

"This is the will of God, even your sanctification."—1 Thess. iv. 3.

First: God has a "WILL." Will implies reason; God is infinite reason. Will implies force; it is determination. God is infinite force. Will, free, uncontrolled will, is the expression of the willer's nature. God's nature is holy, benevolent, unchangeable. Secondly: God has a WILL concerning man. Insignificant though man be, as compared with the universe, and less than nothing as compared with his Maker, he, nevertheless, engages the mind and heart of God. Glorious truth this! Thirdly: God's WILL concerning man is his holiness. "Your sanctification." This means holiness, and holiness is moral excellence—moral assimilation to Himself. If this be the WILL of God concerning man, two conclusions deserve special notice.

I. THAT MAN'S GRAND DUTY CHIMES IN WITH HIS MORAL INTUITIONS AND HIGHEST INTEREST. What is the grand duty of man? Obedience to

the divine will—philosophy can return no other answer. First: *Our moral intuitions urge us to holiness.* There is an ideal character which our intuitions are constantly intruding on our notice, urging us to cultivate. Moral souls everywhere on earth *feel* that they should be true, honest, generous, pure, and devout, in other words that they should be holy. Secondly: *Our highest interest urges us to holiness.* The history of the world shows that men have been prosperous and happy in proportion to their virtues. And human consciousness attests that men are only inwardly happy as they feel that they have lived and done the thing which is right and true. So, then, the grand demand of the Bible instead of being in the slightest incongruous with human nature or its interests, blends in with the strictest accordance.

If this be the WILL of God concerning man, I conclude—

II. THAT MAN HAS AN INFALLIBLE GUIDE TO DETERMINE THE SUCCESSFUL IN PRAYER AND EFFORT. He who goes with God's will, goes with Omnipotence, and if he goes rightly must succeed. First: *Successful prayers are prayers for holiness.* He who prays for

health, long life, secular property, has no reason to expect an answer to his prayer, only so far as these things are sought with the grand motive of promoting holiness. God has not promised to answer any prayer that has not the desire for holiness as its inspiration. Secondly : *Successful efforts are efforts for holiness.* Efforts after wealth, influence, power, fame, may, and frequently do, succeed in the getting of these things ; but what when they are got? If the inspiring desire has not been holiness, the end, which has been happiness, is not obtained. Since God's will is our holiness, no human effort for happiness not aiming at the same grand end, has ever been, or can ever be, successful. Whatever may be the appearance of things, this is the fact, all human prayers and human efforts not aiming at holiness are failures.

THE FUNDAMENTAL FACTS OF EVANGELISM.

"For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world ; but that the world through him might be saved."—John iii. 17.

CHRISTIANITY is built on facts. Those facts are connected with the history of a person, and that person is the Son of God. Three

such facts are in the text. They lie at the foundation of the evangelical system, and they reveal the infinite mercy of God.

I. The first fact is this, that "GOD SENT HIS SON INTO THE WORLD." This fact implies (1) Separateness of existence. (2) Subordination of existence. These no philosophy as yet has reconciled to the doctrine of divine unity. The fact that God sent his Son into the world is the greatest fact in the history of the world, perhaps in the history of the universe. It constitutes the great epoch in the annals of the race.

II. The second fact is this, that "God sent his Son into the world NOT TO CONDEMN IT." This is not what might have been expected. Two things might have led one to expect that if God sent his Son from heaven to earth, it would have been to condemn, to inflict condign punishment. First : *The wickedness of the world.* Before Christ came the world was full of ingratitude, idolatry, corruption, rebellion. It was ripe for vengeance. Secondly : *The ill-treatment his other messengers had received.* The world had persecuted, tormented, murdered his prophets. Would it not, therefore, be natural to expect that if He sent his Son

it would have been on an errand of judgment?

III. The third fact is this, that "God sent his Son into the world to **SAVE IT**." What is salvation? It does not consist in physical, intellectual, or local changes. It is a restoration in the soul, of what it has lost through sin. First: *Supreme love to God*. This is the life of the soul. Secondly: *Constant fellowship with the great Father*. This is the happiness of the soul. Thirdly: *Useful service in the universe*. This is the mission of souls. All these things are lost to the soul through sin, and Christ came to restore them, and the restoration is its salvation.

ASPECTS OF LIFE.

"For what is your life?"—
Jas. iv. 14.

Consider—I. A GREAT MYSTERY. Birth, growth, sleep, waking, volition, death, &c.

II. A PILGRIMAGE TO IMMORTALITY. But for this thought death would be a mystery of despair, a mystery casting its black shadows beforehand on every scene we tread. Have we any confirmation of this glad thought the Gospel gives us? If "God is love," we cannot doubt that "Death is but the beginning of immortality."

For how could God be love, if we live just long enough to know the rapture of a hal-lowed love, and then live too long in the knowledge that the heart's treasure is torn away, &c.? But the bad! They want no confirmation of the thought; that is a demonstration too awful for me.

III. A POTENT INFLUENCE. "No man liveth unto himself." Life is communicative. We are the parents of men's thoughts and habits, speech and actions. Our very glances are sometimes shaping the destinies of men; the combined result of our behaviour, who can measure it? This regal power is wielded by the beggar in his rags. There are some who sway with this power over a domain almost boundless—Carlyle, Voltaire, Emerson, Knox, Calvin, &c. The power for good or evil that is in the hands of the popular thinkers, &c., ought to overwhelm them. But how we all ought to stand in awe of ourselves! Sometimes, we see life reappearing, as beneath the painter's hand I have seen the portrait grow in canvas, as beneath the sculptor's chisel I have seen the statue take form and shape, &c. And, therefore, it is—

IV. A SACRED TRUST. The God who gives it, says, "Use it for me." It is the talent

which again He will require. You may use its power for evil, if you will, but you then rob God. He lent it to be a bright star to light man in the night, not a cloud; to be a propitious wind upon the sea, and not a hurricane to wreck, &c. And therefore, it is—

V. A MOMENTOUS PROBATION. It is the condition of your future. You are sowing the seed of which you shall hereafter reap the harvest. Your life is not a disconnected link, but the germ out of which your heaven or hell shall come. 1. Your own consciousness suggests this. 2. Analogy suggests this. If each period of the life we now live is simply the outcome of what went before, there is at least the probability

that the future will be the outgrowth of the present. 3. The condition of things suggests it. Looking at the opportunities for good and evil, &c. 4. The inevitable result of living suggests it. How do we come out of every temptation? Greater slaves or truer men. How out of pressure? How out of sorrow? We are going to our own place. 5. The attributes of God suggest this. Righteousness and justice demand it. And therefore it is—

VI. A THRILLING DRAMA. "The world's a stage." &c. A Mephistopheles dogs the steps of every man. How will the plot end? God looks on, angels, &c.

VII. A BRIEF EXISTENCE.

H. J. MARTYN.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CXVIII.)

THE SEEMING RIGHT OFTEN RUINOUS.

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death."—Prov. xiv. 12.

MANY of the ways which men pursue cannot even "*seem right*." The way of the habitual blasphemer, sabbath-breaker, debauchee, &c., can scarcely appear

right to any man. They are manifestly wrong. What are the ways that often seem right to men and that are ruinous? We may mention three.

I. THE CONVENTIONALLY MORAL WAY SEEMS RIGHT, BUT IS NEVERTHELESS RUINOUS. Civilised society has its recognised rules of life. These rules recognise only the external life of man. They take

no cognisance of thought, feeling, desire, and the unexpressed things of the soul. Industry, sobriety, veracity, honesty, these are the extent of its demands, and if these are conformed to, society approves, and applauds. Thousands consider these conventional rules to be the standards of character, and pride themselves in their conformity to them. Because they are diligent in their business, they deceive no one, they pay every man his due, they consider their way right. Without disparaging in the least this social morality we are bound to say, that what is conventionally moral may be essentially wrong. It may spring from wrong motives, and be governed by wrong reasons. The Scribes and Pharisees of old were conventionally right. Albeit they were rotten to the core. He who read their natures through denounced them as whited sepulchres. The end of such a way is death. Death to all the elements of well-being.

II. THE FORMALISTICALLY RELIGIOUS WAY SEEMS RIGHT, BUT IS NEVERTHELESS RUINOUS. Religion has its forms, it has its places, and its times of worship, its order of service, its benevolent institutions. A correct and constant attendance to such forms are considered by thousands as religion itself. Regularity in Church, attention to all the recognised rites of religion, contributions according to the general standard of the congregation, all this passes for religion, but is not religion. It is mechanism, nothing more. The motions of machinery not the actions of the soul. There is no life in it, and it cannot lead to life, but to death. "The letter killeth." "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

III. THE WAY OF THE SELFISHLY

EVANGELICAL SEEMS RIGHT BUT IS NEVERTHELESS RUINOUS. Evangelical religion, in the sense of a participation of the spirit of Christ, is the religion of man. There is no true religion apart from a living faith in Christ. But the thing that is come to be called evangelical is to a fearful extent intensely selfish. It is the religion of selfishness. Its appeals are all to the hopes and fears of men. Its preaching makes men feel, but their feelings are all concerned for their own interest; makes men pray, but their prayer is a selfish entreaty for the deliverance from misery, and the attainment of happiness. Fire and brimstone bring men together into congregations and churches. We fear that much that is called the evangelical religion of this age stands in direct opposition to the teachings of Him who said, "He that seeketh his life shall lose it," and also to the teaching of Paul, who said, "Without charity I am nothing." A selfish evangelicalism is the way of death. Men go to hell through churches. What, then, is the way that is *really* right? Here it is; "I am the way." Following Christ is the only way that leads to life.

CONCLUSION: Right and wrong are independent of men's *opinions*, what seems right to men is often wrong, and the reverse. Men are held responsible for their beliefs. A wrong belief, however sincere, will lead to ruin.

(No. CXIX.)

SINFUL MIRTH.

"Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heaviness."—Prov. xiv. 13.

THERE is an *innocent* mirth, a sunny, sparkling, cheerfulness, arising from a happy natural temperament. There is a *virtuous*

mirth. A mirth that has moral worth in it, springing from holy states of heart. This mirth, all should have. We are commanded "to rejoice evermore." There is a *sinful* mirth, and of this the text speaks. Three things are suggested concerning this mirth.

I. IT IS BOISTEROUS IN EXPRESSION. The "laughter" to which Solomon here refers is of a certain kind. Laughter in itself is not wrong. "It is," says Steele, "that which strikes upon the mind, and being too volatile and strong breaks out in the tremor of the voice." And this author speaks of different kind of laughers—the "dimplers," the "smilers," the "grinners," and the "horse laughers." A man's laugh is often the best index to his character. "How much," says Carlyle, "lies in laughter—the cipher-key wherewith we decipher the whole man! Some men wear an everlasting barren simper; in the smile of others lies the cold glitter, as of ice; the fewest are able to laugh what can be called laughing, but only sniff, and titter, and sniggle from the throat outwards, or, at least, produce some whiffing, husky cachinnation, as if they were laughing through wool. Of none such come good. The man who cannot laugh is not only fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils; but his own life is already a treason and a stratagem." The laughter of which Solomon speaks, however, is not a natural laughter. It is a hypocritical laughter; it is the laughter of a man who has little or no joy in him—a man ill at ease. It is what Solomon calls elsewhere, "the laughter of the fool," and he said of it, "It is mad." The laughter of a corrupt heart. It is the roar of the maniac; the laugh of the drunkard, who is about stepping over a fearful precipice, is not more mad

than the laughter of him who goes through life with a heart in hostility to God.

II. IT IS SAD IN SPIRIT. "Even in laughter the *heart is sorrowful*." The jovial merriment of the social board, the joke, and the laugh, as the glass goes round, are but a veil drawn to conceal a world of misery within. Beneath all, the heart is sorrowful, with dark moral memories of the past, with gloomy forebodings as to the future. Sinful laughter is but misery mimicking happiness. Judge not men by appearance. The most miserable may often show the most merriment. A sorrowful heart lies under all that's gay, and jovial and sparkling in the circles of wickedness.

III. IT IS WRETCHED IN END. "The end of that mirth is heaviness." (1.) Sinful mirth will have an end. Its jestings and carousings will not go on for ever. Disease, age, decay, death, hush all for ever. (2.) "The end is heaviness." There is no laughter in the agonies of death, no laughter on the day of judgment, no laughter in hell.

(No. CXX.)

THE MISERY OF THE APOSTATE, AND THE HAPPINESS OF THE GOOD.

"The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways; and a good man shall be satisfied from himself."—Prov. xiv. 14.

I. THE MISERY OF THE APOSTATE. "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways," First: *The character of the apostate*. "He is a backslider in heart." There is a sense in which all men are backsliders. Sin is an apostacy; souls turning away from virtue and from God. The backslider here, however, refers to one who, by God's grace, had been restored to moral goodness, but who had

fallen away, "Left his first love." Such apostacy, or backsliding, is too general in the world; Judas, Demas, Peter, David, are examples. The real backslider is the one that backslides in heart. There are many who don't seem to backslide in their conduct; their external life in relation to the true thing continues the same as ever, but their heart has changed. The backslider in the eye of God is the backslider in heart. Secondly: *The doom of the apostate.* "Filled with his own ways." Misery inevitably follows his conduct. If he is restored he will suffer, he will be "filled with his own ways." David felt it so (Psa. li.), and so did Peter, who wept bitterly. But if he is not restored, his misery will be greater. The punishment of the sinner consists in his being "filled with his own ways."

II. THE HAPPINESS OF THE GOOD. "A good man shall be satisfied for himself." Who is the good man? *The man who loves the supremely good supremely.* "Such a man shall be satisfied from himself." Whilst the backslider's misery shall spring out of himself, so shall the happiness of the good man. The happiness of ungodly men, such as it is, is not in themselves, it is something outside of them, their children, their business, their friendships, their position, their property. Not so the happiness of the good man, it is in himself, it is independent of circumstances, he carries it wherever he goes. It is a well of water springing up. It is—

"What nothing earthly gives or can destroy,
The soul's calm sunshine and the heart-felt joy."
POPE.

(No. CXXI.)

THE CREDULOUS AND THE CAUTIOUS.

"The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going."—Prov. xiv. 15—19.

"SIMPLE" and foolish in these verses must be regarded as convertible, and represent the same character. So also the words "wise" and "prudent." We have, therefore, two characters, the sinfully credulous and the cautiously believing.

I. THE HASTILY CREDULOUS. "The 'simple' believeth every word." First: *One of the strongest tendencies in man's mental nature is his propensity to believe.* It is one of the most voracious appetites of the soul. The child opens its mental mouth, hungering for tales from the nurse's lips, and will eagerly swallow everything that is said. "As the young birds," says a modern author, "instinctively open their mouths for food, and their mothers not even once since the creation of the world, have thrown in chaff to mock their hunger, so the trustfulness of children is the opening of their mouth for truth. If we fling falsehood in, and laugh at their disappointment, the Lord will require it." Alas, this is done, and the child grows up to manhood disappointed, sceptical, and suspicious. (1) *This propensity to believe implies a state of society that does not exist.* Were men born into heaven, were society free from all error and deception, it would be not only a right, but a beneficial thing to believe every word, to credit every utterance, and to confide in every character. This is the state of society for which man was created, but he has lost it. He comes into a world of lies. (2) *This propensity to believe explains the reign of priesthood.* Priestcraft feeds and fattens on the natural credulousness of the soul.

All the errors, superstitions, and absurdities which have ever prevailed in connection with religion, may be accounted for by the soul's hunger for things to believe.

(3) *This propensity to believe shows the easiness of the condition on which God has made the salvation of man to depend.* "He that believeth shall be saved."

Secondly: *The thoughtless yielding to this tendency is an immense loss.* "The fool rageth, and is confident." The fool sees no danger, dreads no harm. He rushes recklessly forward into mischief. (1) *He is passionate. He rageth.* Counsels and warnings only irritate him. Advice, cautions, and reproofs, fall on his soul as sparks of combustible matter. They throw his whole nature into a raging flame of passion. (2) *He is stubborn.* He "is confident." What does he care about your warnings. Nothing. He despises you, he laughs at them. (3) *He is foolish.* "He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly, and he inherits folly." (4) *He is despised.* "A man of wicked devices is hated. The man who has given way to his credulity becomes all this. He is passionate, ignorant of the grounds of his belief, he cannot brook contradiction, his opinions being prejudices, he is stubborn in holding them, and in all this he is "foolish" and "hated."

II. THE CAUTIOUSLY BELIEVING. "The prudent man looketh well to his going." True prudence is indicated by two things—First: *A dread of evil.* "A wise man feareth." True dread of evil is consistent with true courage. Few, if any, displayed more heroism than Noah, yet, being moved by fear, he prepared an ark. Evil, both physical and moral, is a bad thing in the universe, and it is right to dread it, as we dread poisonous serpents

and ravenous beasts. True prudence is indicated—Secondly: *By a departure from evil.* "He departeth from evil." Moral evil is the heart of all evil, and this he forsakes. He shuns it as an enemy to God and the universe. The prudence is indicated—Thirdly: *By mental greatness. He is dignified with knowledge.* He is "crowned with knowledge." Caution in believing is necessary for three reasons. First: The strength of man's tendency to believe. Secondly: The prevalence of error in society. The damning influence of falsehood on the soul.

(No. CXXII.)

THE MAJESTY OF GOODNESS.

"The evil bow before the good; and the wicked at the gates of the righteous."—Prov. xiv. 19.

THREE remarks are suggested by the social state indicated in these words; the state in which the wicked are prostrate in reverence and entreaty before the good—

I. IT IS A STATE WHICH SELDOM APPEARS TO BE. The wicked generally sit supreme in society, they have done so through all past ages and are doing so now, and that to a great extent, even in what is called "Christian society." The influence, the wealth, the rule of the world, appears to be with the wicked. Evil appears still to be the prince of the power of the social atmosphere. The good seem for the most part to be the destitute, despised, and oppressed. This has always been to reflecting saints one of the greatest difficulties connected with the government of God. "Wherefore doth the wicked prosper," &c. (Jer. xii. 1—3.) "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped. For I was envious of the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." (Ps. lxxiii. 2, 3.)

II. IT IS A STATE WHICH ALWAYS OUGHT TO BE. It ought to be—First, as a matter of *right*. The good alone are the truly dignified, the truly royal. Their lineage, their inheritance, their characters, their friendships, their engagements are all regal. They are kings and priests unto God. There is more royalty in the hut of a godly pauper, than in all the palaces of unregenerate monarchs. Secondly: As a matter of *expedience*. Indeed, what is right is always expedient. The wicked could not even live on the earth without the good. Unmixed wickedness would soon reduce the earth to a Sodom and Gomorrah. The good are the salt of the earth. Governments cannot stand long that are not fashioned by the principles of the good. Evil, therefore, ought to bow before the good.

III. IT IS A STATE WHICH INEVITABLY MUST BE. First: *Conscience necessitates it*. Even the worst men now and here are compelled by the laws of their moral nature to render homage to the good. Chastity, truth, honesty, disinterestedness, moral heroism, where is there a conscience that bows not to these? Secondly: *Retribution necessitates it*. When trials, and sufferings and dangers overtake the wicked, do they not always go for refuge to the good. They will cringe at their "gate," they will fawn at their feet. "Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out." How did the 260 souls bow before Paul, the prisoner, amidst the dangers of the storm on the Adriatic Sea. He became the moral commander as the perils thickened.

(No. CXXIII.)

A GROUP OF SOCIAL PRINCIPLES.

"The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends. He that despiseth his neigh-

bour sinneth: but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he. Do they not err that devise evil? but mercy and truth shall be to them that devise good."—Prov. xiv. 20—32.

THESE verses indicate certain principles which seem everywhere at work in the social system of our world. Here is—

I. INHUMANITY. The poor is here spoken of as "hated," despised, and injured by those that "devise evil." There have always been men in society, and still are, who hate and oppress the poor. There are many who have professed great friendship to those in wealth whom they have despised in poverty. These are what an old expositor calls, "Swallow friends, that leave in winter." Why are the poor thus despised? First, because of *selfishness*. There is nothing to be got from the poor—no money, no patronage, no fame. Their good word goes not for much in the world. Their opinions are neither quoted nor respected. Secondly: Because of *pride*. Pride is a form of selfishness. It is not thought respectable to notice the poor. A poor relation must be ignored. All this is *inhuman*, and, therefore, sinful. "He that despiseth his neighbour, sinneth." In such conduct there is sin—(1) sin against the best feelings of our nature—(2) sin against the arrangements of God's providence—(3) sin against Heaven's method for developing benevolence amongst men. Here is—

II. SERVILITY. "The rich hath many friends." There is a keen satire in these words. There are base-natured people in all society, and their name is "legion," who court the rich. Even in the religious world there are those who will fawn on the man of purse, and flatter him with adulations. Men, though swindlers in heart, are made chairmen of their public meetings and presidents of their

religious societies. It is humiliating to see men calling themselves the ministers of Christ, cringing before the chair of the wealthy, and cheering every utterance. The sect churches teem with parasites. A more miserable spirit than this know I not; unchristian, unmanly, most pernicious. Never will Christianity be truly represented, until its disciples shall practically regard intellectual and moral worth united, as the only title to honour and position. "The rich hath many friends." Professed friends, for if a man has not the morally excellent and lovable in him, whatever may be the amount of his wealth, the friends he gets will only be the false and the fawning.

III. GENEROSITY. "He that hath mercy upon the poor, happy is he." There is mercy for the poor in society. It is seen in the numerous and varied benevolent institutions that crowd Christendom. Those who have this mercy are happy. First: *In the approbation of their own consciences.* Mercy is an element of happiness.

"It is twice blessed," &c. They are happy. Secondly: *In the commendation of their God.* "Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble." (Psa. xli. 1.) "He hath dispersed, he hath given to the poor; his righteousness endureth for ever; his horn shall be exalted with honour." (Psa. cxii. 9.)

IV. RETRIBUTION. "Do they not err that devise evil, but mercy and truth *shall be* to them that devise good." Yes, those that have devised evil against the poor will find, sooner or later, that they have greatly erred. They will find that the measure that they meted unto others is meted back to them. On the contrary, "mercy and truth *shall be* to them that devise good." The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand. Read the fifteenth chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew in order to see the retribution that the unmerciful and the merciful will meet with at last. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory," &c.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

PROVIDENCE—ITS MYSTERIES.

THE events of Providence appear to us very much like the letters thrown into a post-bag, and this parcel then sent forth on its destination. The person who carries it—

"Messenger of joy,
Perhaps to thousands, and of grief to some;
To him indifferent whether grief or joy."

Onward he moves, quite unconcerned as to the nature of the

communication he bears, or the effects produced by them. And when we look into that repository, it may seem as if its contents were in inextricable confusion, and we wonder how the letters, parcels, money, periodicals, should ever reach their individual destinations. But then every letter has its special address inscribed upon it, it has the name and residence of the party, and so it shall in due time fall into his hands,

and bring its proper intelligence. And what different purposes do these letters fulfil—what varied emotions do they excite! This declares that friends are in health and prospering; this other is the bearer of news of wealth, or of the wealth itself; this third tells of some crushing disappointments, and quenches long cherished hopes by the tidings of the utter failure of deep-planned schemes; while this fourth, with sable symbols, announces to the wife that she is a widow, or to the parent that he is childless, or to the child, fondly cherished by the mother, that he is an orphan.

It is a kind of picture of the movements of Providence.

What a crowd of events huddled together, and apparently confused, does it carry along with it! Very diverse are the objects bound up in that bundle, very varied are the emotions which they are to excite when opened up; yet how coolly and systematically does the vehicle proceed on its way! Neither the joy nor the sorrow which it produces causes it to linger an instant in its course. But, meanwhile, every occurrence, or bundle of occurrences, is let out at its proper place. Each has a name inscribed upon it. Each has a place to which it is addressed. Each, too, has a message to carry, and a purpose to fulfil. Some inspire hope or joy, others raise only fear and sorrow. The events which are unfolded by the same

course of things, and which fall out the same day, bring gladness to one, and land another in deepest distress. On the occurrence of the same event, you perceive one weeping and another rejoicing. Some of the dispensations are observed to propagate prosperity through a whole community. And these others, so black and dismal, and of which so many arrive at the same time, carry, as they are scattered, gloom into the abodes of thousands.

But amid all this seeming confusion, every separate event has its separate destination. If pestilence has only some one person devoted to it in a city or community, that person it will assuredly find out, and execute the judgment of heaven upon him. If there be a thousand persons allotted to it in a district, it will not allow one of the thousand to escape. If, among the numbers who are dying, there be one regarding whom it has no commission to seize upon him, that individual must remain untouched. "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee." It has a commission, and will execute it; but then it cannot go beyond its commission. And in regard to every person to whom the event comes, it has a special end to accomplish, and it bears a special message, if he will but read it and attend to it.

McCOSH.

GUILT OF MIND.

"The guilty mind
Debases the great image that it wears,
And levels us with brutes."

HOWARD.

Theological Notes and Queries.

OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

BAPTISM.

Querist.—Apart from the customs of all sects and the dogmas of all theological schools, what is the Gospel idea of Baptism?

INQUIRER.

Replicant.—In answer to "Inquirer," we give the following extract:—

"The passages in the New Testament, which mention the Christian rite of Baptism with water, are very few; and they show clearly that its nature and its use are similar to the nature and use of the Initiatory rites of the Jewish system. This would be antecedently probable; and is made certain by the entire absence of the indications of difference, which would be given if difference really existed.

"John iv. 1. The Pharisees heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John: though Jesus did not himself baptize, but his disciples.

"Acts ii. 38. Repent, and be baptized each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.—41. Then they, accepting what was said by him, were baptized.

"Acts viii. 12. They were baptized, both men and women.—16. For not yet had it [the Holy Spirit] descended upon any one of them; but they had only been baptized for the name of the Lord Jesus.

"Acts viii. 36. See, there is water; what hinders my being

baptized? And he ordered the carriage to stop; and they both went down to the water, Philip and the chamberlain, and he baptized him.

"Acts ix. 18. And rising up, he was baptized; and, taking food, his strength was restored.

"Acts xxii. 16. Rise up, receive baptism; and wash away thy sins, calling on his name.

"Acts x. 47. Can any withhold water, that these should not be baptized, who received the Holy Spirit, even as we also?

"Acts xvi. 15. When she was baptized and her family, she entreated us, saying.

"Acts xvi. 33. And he was baptized himself, and all belonging to him, immediately.

"Acts xviii. 8. And many of the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized.

"Acts xix. 5. On hearing this, they were baptized for the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul put his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke other languages, and prophesied.

"1 Cor. i. 14. I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius, that no one should say, that you were baptized for my name.—17. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel.

"Heb. vi. 1. Instructions on baptisms, and imposition of hands.

"These are the only passages in which it appears from the connection that the baptism men-

tioned is the baptism of the body with water. Our Lord spoke of another baptism, of which He was Himself the subject, and which his disciples would also share; but this was not the baptism with water; nor does it appear to be connected with it, except as everything in the Christian course follows the commencement. He said, 'I have a baptism wherewith to be baptized.' Luke xii. 50. 'With the baptism that I am baptized with, you shall be baptized.' Mark x. 39. It is of this baptism that St. Paul speaks when he says, that they who are baptized for Christ are baptized for a death like his death: and, being crucified with Christ, are also buried with Him, and raised to a new life. Rom. vi. 3. So he says that Christians are circumcised with Christ,—they are consecrated and cleansed by their union to Christ,—being buried with Him in baptism, and raised with Him, through their faith in God. Col. ii. 11. As the circumcision and crucifixion are spiritual, so the burial and resurrection are spiritual: and the Baptism here referred to must be spiritual also; and exclusively so, if there be consistency in the use of the terms, and correctness in the statements. All who have this baptism do seek to be like Christ. Gal. iii. 27. For them there is one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism. Eph. iv. 5. This is the Baptism which St. Peter declares does save,—that which is, not a cleansing of the body, nor a correspondence to the destructive flood: but the pursuit of a good conscience,—the antitype to the example of Christ, who once suffered for sins, the just on behalf of the unjust, that He might bring us to God,—whose pattern of self-denial and suffering all are called to imitate. 1 Pet. iii.

18, 21; iv. 1. It is simply an assumption, without the least support either from the New Testament or from the Old, that, in these figurative expressions of the Apostles, any reference is made to immersions in water, such as were subsequently introduced. For these there is the authority of the Fathers of the third century, but not that of the Apostles of Christ. The purifications required by the Jewish law, in connection with the Temple service, are called Baptisms. Heb. ix. 10. But no immersion of the body in water is commanded or mentioned in that law. Every purification with water, of one person by another, was by sprinkling. And there were no other public purifications with water, but the washing of the hands and feet. Nothing more than these simple services was enjoined by law. Nothing more appears to have been practised by the Jews during the times of the Old Testament. All the evidence brought forward respecting the practice of immersion by Jews or by Christians, is of a date comparatively recent, when superstitious customs were multiplied, and the traditions of men were regarded more than the commandments of God. The prevalent opinions respecting the rite of baptism, and some other subjects, would experience a considerable change, if the motto, so much extolled but so often forgotten, were consistently maintained, 'The Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants.' Godwin.

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Query to be answered.

Does 2 Cor. vi. 14, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," &c., stand opposed to a business partnership between a godly and an ungodly man? or

does it stand opposed to a marriage contract between a godly and an ungodly person? If the latter, what of those ministers who issue

a license, and solemnize the service? Do they not thereby become "partakers of other men's sins?"
Australia. SINCERITAS.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE NONSUCH PROFESSOR IN HIS MERIDIAN SPLENDOUR; or, the Singular Actions of Sanctified Christians. By WILLIAM SECKER. To which is added, The Wedding Ring, a Sermon, by the same Author. London: R. D. Dickinson, Farringdon Street.

THE author of this work lived in the last century, and was minister of "Allhallows Church," London. He was evidently a man of peculiar genius, original thought, and strong religious feelings. His imagination was fertile with striking and sometimes grotesque illustrations. His style pithy, antithetic, quaint, and pungent. His dedicatory epistle to Sir Edward Barkham and his lady may be taken as a fair specimen of his style of thought and expression. It is as follows:—

"Honoured Worthies,—You have tied me in so many silken cords of kindness, that I must live and die in these pleasant bonds. The only return I can make you is by pen and ink, to acknowledge myself your debtor; persuaded that your noble minds are like that of Artaxerxes, as condescending to receive small things from others, as to grant great things himself. I am sensible what prejudices are conceived against recommendatory epistles. I presume I shall not kindle strange fire upon your altar, by informing you that I believe you take more pleasure in godliness than in greatness. You have learned that piety is the best parentage, and that to be *new born* is better than to be *high born*. It is reported that 'in some great personages' houses, there are more oaths heard in one day than prayers in one year.' But in your house, there are more prayers heard in one day than oaths in one year. God has ornamented your terrestrial crowns with many choice jewels. He has given you of the fatness of the earth as well as of the dew of heaven. Esau's venison, as well as Jacob's blessing; the nether springs of common bounty, as well as the upper springs of special

mercy. There are four showers which have watered your garden—a fruitful posterity, an inward tranquillity, a faithful society, and a grateful memory. Ah, how liberal has God's hand been toward you; and how lively should your hearts be towards Him! You have a large room in many godly bosoms; but, alas! the best man's confidence on earth is insufficient to carry you to heaven. A crack in the greatest pebble is not equal to a flaw in the smallest diamond. These present you with a piece, which is more practical than notional; more fit for a *Christian to live upon* than for a *critic to look upon*. I hope the dregs do not lie so thick in it as to prevent your drawing clear wine from it. I have attempted from this scripture to draw a believer's picture, and hope you will view it with an attentive eye. May you remember that by how much you are made greater than others, by so much better you should be than others! On earth it is your chief business to seek God, and in heaven it will be your chief blessedness to see God. While some look with envy on the rich man's estate, may you look with trembling on the rich man's accounts! You know you should not only be the *pictures* of piety, but also *patterns* of piety; then, while you are descending the hill of nature, you will also be ascending the hill of grace, you will prove yourselves such jewels of mercy as shall be locked up in the cabinet of glory. Now, that your happiness may exceed your hope, that your little family below may compose a part of the family above, that it may live holily with you on earth, and eternally with God in heaven, is the earnest prayer of, most worthy patrons,

"Your humble servant,

"WILLIAM SECKER."

This extract will stimulate our readers, we are sure, to procure this extraordinary little volume.

A SUGGESTIVE COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT ON AN ORIGINAL PLAN. St. Luke. Vol. II. By Rev. W. H. VAN DOREN. London: R. D. Dickinson, 92, Farringdon Street.

WERE a young divine, possessing the necessary qualifications, namely, great philosophic penetration, high poetic feeling, profound reverence for truth, a thorough acquaintance with the original language, an accurate and extensive knowledge of oriental manners, scenes, and customs, to ask us what literary work he should give himself as the greatest and most urgent? our reply would be that of abstracting the great universal and eternal principles of the Bible. We would tell him to go through every chapter of that grand old book, commencing at the beginning, stripping it of all orientalisms, localisms, symbolisms, and ascertaining the moral and redemptive substance of the whole. That redemptive and moral substance which could be put into a space small as compared with the great bulk of the book, would be the very spirit of the Bible:—that which man wants to

regenerate, quicken, and perfect him. We would not accept, however, this tract, which it would be, containing the spirit of the Bible, in lieu of the Bible as it now is, for we like the wonderful, variegated, and often gorgeous wrappings with which the old book enfolds eternal principles, but we would accept the tract as infinitely more valuable than all the bulky commentaries extant on the Holy Scriptures. This "suggestive commentary" does in some degree what we desiderate. Only it does a great deal more, and therefore swells the bulk of the book. It imports many ideas that are not found in the text, and often, homiletically, gives the reader the substance of a sermon. What we have said of the first volume holds true of this. Sunday-school teachers and preachers will find the work a great boon.

PREPARING FOR HOME. A Series of Expository Discourses on the Fifth Chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians. By JONATHAN WATSON. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

THE preface to this volume, in which the author speaks of the work entitled "Heaven our Home," as a "valuable treatise," we confess did not at first prepossess us with a favourable judgment of him as a teacher of that religion which inculcates self-obliviousness, which tells us we must lose our life, and not seek our own. The selfishness and sensuousness which are imported into modern evangelicalism, are the devil in the garb of religion. In modern evangelicalism heaven and hell are preached as the great arguments for a religious life. Salvation is represented as a rescue from some outward hell, rather than as a rescue from selfishness, ignorance, carnality, and ungodliness. The religion of Christ is urged as a means to an end, rather than exhibited as the grandest end of being. In our view, religion is urgent, not because there is a heaven or hell, but because there is a God of infinite perfection to be adored, worshipped, and obeyed. Though the work before us is a little tainted with this corrupt evangelicalism, it scarcely belongs to the class. There is a good deal of high spiritual teaching in it, a good deal in keeping with the doctrine that Christ came "to redeem men from all iniquity," &c. On the whole we heartily commend it.

SERMONS: Experimental and Practical. An Offering to Home Missionaries. By JOEL HAWES, D.D. London: R. D. Dickinson, 92, Farringdon Street.

"THE sermons in this volume," says the venerable author, "are of a miscellaneous character, not designed for the discussion of points of Christian doctrine, or any peculiarities of religious sentiment; but plain, practical, experimental, setting forth in direct, simple style the great evangelical truths and duties which the author thoroughly

believes, and which he has found, in the experience of a long life in the ministry, most effective and useful in the awakening and converting of sinners, and in quickening and aiding Christians in the divine life. Several of the discourses here published were prepared and preached to the people of the author's charge, and often in other places, in seasons of religious revival, and were made by the Holy Spirit instrumental of much good."

The volume contains thirty-six short sermons, on ordinary subjects. The teaching is thoroughly orthodox, the thinking is clear and consecutive, the spirit is earnest and devout. They are decidedly more thoughtful than the average of popular discourses.

THE NEW CREATION. By Rev. JOHN MILLS. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

By "the New Creation," which is at once the subject and the title of this book, and which is the subject of repeated reference in the Holy Scriptures, the author means that new moral creation in the souls of men which is being gradually effected in the world by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The old heavens, and the old earth, which are to be burnt up, are the old moral systems of error and corruption. We accept this view as at once rational, scriptural, and practical. The work is divided into ten chapters, the subjects of which are—Preliminary Observations, Injurious Effects of the Pre-millennium Theory, the Nature and Character of the New Creation, the Analogy between the Works of the Creator in the Material and the Spiritual World, the Harmony of Prophecy and its accordance with the whole Tenor of Divine Revelation, &c., &c., &c. Though we do not accept all the interpretations of the author, nor consider all his arguments as conclusive, we estimate his work as one of great value. It goes against one of the most dangerous and growing errors of the age, pre-millennarianism. Its discussions are calm, thoughtful, candid, often enlightening, and suggestive.

FIRST STEPS TOWARDS A CHURCH OF THE FUTURE. London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Co., Stationers' Hall Court.

ALL the productions of the author of this work, whether they agree with our views or not, demand respect. He is always searching, reverent, candid, and devout.

THE WATERS SAW THREE. A Sermon by Rev. COWELL BROWN. London: Elliot Stock.

THIS sermon was preached on behalf of the widows and orphans of the men drowned at Padstow, through the recent lifeboat disaster at that place. The discourse indicates considerable mental force.



A HOMILY

ON

The Hour of Destiny.

"Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come."—John vii. 30.

THE most momentous hour in the annals of time, was the hour of Christ's crucifixion. Every hour in the world's history is dependent on this, and derives its highest significance from it. It was the hour of the world's redemption—an hour in which eternal rectitude was triumphantly vindicated; the powers of darkness successfully vanquished; the liberty of untold millions of human souls graciously secured; and the sublime purposes of God with reference to the interests of this world gloriously accomplished!

This was the central hour of time, into which the hopes of all preceding hours had converged, and out of which must emanate all the joys and lustre of all succeeding ones. All the benefits of the past and prospects of the future are *blended* in this mysterious *hour*. In this hour we find the greatest exhibition of Divine love, the grandest wonder for angels, and the theme of highest praises for innumerable myriads of redeemed souls through endless ages. Christ

said of it, "My hour"; as if all the interests of his being, the *events* of his life, the *purposes* of his mission, and the *glory* of his kingdom had *all* been condensed into *one* grand-mysterious *hour*. Now, the words suggest several practical thoughts.

I. *That Christ's hour was divinely predestinated.* "No man laid hands on him, because his *hour* had not yet come." That is, the predestinated hour for Him to finish his gracious work, to substantialize all typical shadows, and to lay down his precious life for the redemption of a sin-ruined world, had not arrived. Such an hour had to come, for it had been predestinated; therefore, it was impossible for any earthly power either to prevent its occurrence, or to hasten its arrival. The exact date of this hour was a fixed fact in the calendar of time! It was "the *hour* and *power* of darkness;" and also the predestinated hour of Christ's glorification! "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said: Father, the *hour* is come, *glorify* thy Son, that thy Son also, may glorify thee." This was evidently the *hour of destiny*.

First: *The numerous predictions of Scripture prove this.* It is a fact that the solemn hour of Christ's passion had been *predicted*. "To him all the prophets did witness." They witnessed to his supernatural character, his great humiliation, his death and resurrection! And the apostles explained the predictions of the prophets in the light of these wonderful events. They declared to the world that "those things which God had showed by the mouth of all his prophets that Christ should *suffer*, he hath so fulfilled." The hour of Christ's death, in which an atonement was made for the sins of the world, was the burden of all the prophecies, the substance of all the shadows of the old dispensation, and the sublime theme of all the apostles. The Scriptural proof-texts of this statement are too numerous to be quoted; like a golden thread they extend from Genesis to Revelation; they sparkle like gems on every page of the Bible. In the earliest

dawn of human history it was predicted that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent, which is explained by most biblical expositors as referring to the conquest of Christ over Satan on Calvary. This was a Divine index designed to guide the minds of men down through the ages to the sublime hour of destiny in which the glorious Son of man would thoroughly defeat the Old Serpent, the spiritual adversary of the human race. Everything in the economy of this world was directed towards this central event. All the principles, opinions, institutions, and theories of mankind, marched along to one grand crisis on the cross, and from which emerged a new order of things—a new birth for the worn-out race of man. A new and more glorious era was commenced. The promise of this hour was coeval with the fall of man, as we have already observed. The ancient patriarchs had believed this, and relied in faith upon it. The whole ceremonial institution symbolized it in its types and shadows. The prophets all proclaimed it eloquently in their books. Every temporal event in the history of the Jewish nation was suggestive of it. It was dimly and imperfectly symbolized even in the mythology of the heathen. The grandest achievements of learning and civilization among the different nations of the world, co-operated in preparing the way for it. All the events of Providence centred in it. Christ himself was sensibly conscious of it in every step of his life, and he frequently warned his disciples of its solemn approach. Its influence has permeated all the hours of time. It was emphatically the *hour of destiny*: not the destiny of one man, nor of one nation, not even the destiny of Christ individually, but the destiny of the *whole universe*, visible and invisible, as centred in Him. All that preceded this hour was typical and shadowy, and all that succeeded it is real and permanent. We assert that it was the *hour of destiny*.

Secondly: *The long-suffering of God in the preservation of the human race proves this.* Why was the human race suffered to go on in its sinful revolt against God, from generation to generation, and from century to century, unpunished?

Why did He not inflict on sinful man the penalty of His violated law? Is not God a being of infinite justice? Is He not infinitely zealous of his own glory, and of the unsullied honour and purity of his throne? Is not sin exceedingly odious and abominable in his sight? Does not the Bible declare of Him: "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity; wherefore lookest thou upon them that deal treacherously, and holdest thy tongue?"

Can it be that the deserved penalty of moral transgression is withheld because there yet remain in human nature such redeeming qualities as shall atone for past sin, and lead man eventually to a radical and permanent reformation? Alas! the moral history of the human race from the fall of Adam until the advent of the Messiah, supplies the most conclusive demonstration of the utter falsity of this hypothesis. Man, as a sinner, is totally depraved, and is in a lost and hopeless condition as regards his own resources of salvation.

If this be true, why was he spared and tolerated to go on in his sins? Why was he not hunted down like the fallen angels into everlasting darkness, wretchedness, and woe, the very *moment* he transgressed the righteous law of God? Was it because sin was not obnoxious to God; or did He lack the power to punish the guilty, and enforce the penalty of his law? No; this is impossible! Reason, conscience, and revelation testify that sin is abominable unto the Lord; and also that he is a being of omnipotent power. Yet He suffered man to live, and He blessed him with many evidences of his sympathy, love, and fellowship. Ignore the fact of Christ's *atonement*, and what reasonable ground is there left upon which we can account for the long *forbearance* of a just God towards a *sinful race*? We ask this question of the proud philosopher who claims to understand and explain the laws of the universe. Let him answer it if he can. We put this question to the scoffing sceptic, who hurls his mean sneers and impious taunts against the glorious fact of revelation. Let him give us a rational solution of this problem. We appeal to the subtle rationalist, who, under a false pretext of seeking after

truth, *clandestinely* endeavours to rob the blessed Word of God of its supernatural character. Let him, if he has it in his ability, give us a satisfactory answer to this question. Let any of our self-righteous moralists, our modern Pharisees, tell us how sin can be forgiven *without an atonement*? It is only in the light of the important transactions of this mysterious hour of destiny, referred to in our text, that we can see clearly *why* God suffered man to live in his sins, and bestowed so many blessings upon him. Man was spared when he sinned, because the marvellous work of *this hour* had been *predestinated from eternity*. It was ordained that in the fulness of time Christ should suffer, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. The human race has been continued on earth since the very moment sin entered the world, through the *vicarious merits of Christ*. There was an hour to dawn in which the claims of the law would be adjusted; the mystery of forbearance explained; and the course of everlasting joy and gratitude made manifest. Christ said, "For *this cause* came I to this *hour*." It was *the hour of destiny*.

Thirdly: *The influence which this hour has exerted on the condition of the world proves it.* The transactions of this hour have wielded a wide and extensive influence on the minds of men and the events of history in all ages. It is a retrospective and a prospective influence, extending back to all past generations and onward to all future generations. The spirits of just men made perfect, of angels in glory, and probably the inhabitants of all other worlds, as well as sinners on earth, have had in the sublime events of *this hour* perhaps a clearer conception and a more glorious exhibition of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the majesty of divine justice, the infinitude of divine love, the glory of divine condescension, the riches of divine grace, and of the depth of divine wisdom, than they ever had obtained before. There is no event in the universe so marvellous, important, and suggestive as the *death of Christ*. This *was* the grand theme of patriarchs, priests, prophets, and apostles, "Unto whom it was revealed that not

unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things which are now reported unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven ; which things the *angels* desire to look into." This *has* been the theme of all Christians since that period, and it *will* be the theme of wonder and of praise to all created intelligences through endless ages. A contemplation of it fills the heart of every Christian with love, and stamps his actions with holiness. The influence of this hour has been spreading and deepening through the ages. Its effects are visible on the social condition of the world. Its influence has extended to every branch of literature and science ; it has elevated the moral character of all our institutions. This hour has, like the sun, lighted up the world ; its rays have penetrated into the dark regions of the earth, and its heat is being diffused rapidly through the great heart of humanity, which had been chilled by sin. Life, increasing vigour, and moral beauty flow out of that hour. Now, can it be possible that the grand event of this mysterious hour, to which all the predictions of the prophets refer, to which all the events of time and eternity are related directly or indirectly, upon which the destiny of all men is suspended, into the wonders of which all the angels gaze with admiration—an event whose influence is felt through all the relations of our being, which has changed the moral aspect of the world, strengthened truth and weakened error, elevated the lowly and humbled the proud—can it be possible that this is a *fortuitous occurrence* ? Then the solar position of the sun, the balancing of the worlds, yea, the universe itself, with all its laws, phenomena, and events, are all the result of *chance*. Blot out this *hour* with its sublime events and the moral universe is left without a sun, the system of providence is inexplicable, the gracious purposes of the Deity are obscured, and the moral destiny of the human race is involved in impenetrable darkness and uncertainty !

Now the hour which *has* exerted and *does* exert such an influence wide-spread and lasting, must have been *predestinated*. It was indeed *the hour of destiny*. Observe again—

II. THAT CHRIST'S HOUR WAS ABOVE ALL CONTINGENCY AND HUMAN INTERFERENCE. "And they *sought* to take him, but no man *laid hands* on him." Why did not they interfere, lay hands on Him, and take his life? Was it because they did not hate Him? or were they restrained by a sense of justice? or did they dread the penalty of the law? Were they afraid of committing a sin? or of meeting with resistance? or lacked they a favourable opportunity? Nay, not any of these considerations prevented them from laying hands on Him. A very different reason from any of these is assigned by the inspired biographers why they did not lay hands on Him and take his life. It is this: "No man laid hands on him *because his hour had not yet come.*" They could not take his life, however great their thirst for his blood, until his *hour had come.* This fact goes to show three things:—The universality of divine providence; the futility of human opposition to the ways of God; and the steadfastness of the divine plan.

First: *The universality of divine providence.* It is intimated in the text that those wicked men were *restrained* from laying violent hands on Christ, and the *reason* for this is given. The restraint and the cause of it were not human, but divine. They *sought* to do it, but they were restrained in their actions. The hour of Christ's death was divinely decreed, and no natural circumstance nor human strategy could possibly interfere with it. Now, that invisible power that guarded the life of Christ against the violence of wicked men, was *divine providence.* All beings, objects, laws, and events are under the supreme control of a heavenly providence. It comprehends the minute and vast alike, for nothing is great and small before God. Were it not for this we could not commit all our cares to Him. We could not trust Him under all circumstances, neither could we feel gratitude unto Him for all blessings and deliverances. If there were any such a thing as chance, we could never feel safe, neither would God's government be perfect and universal. If this were a fact it would weaken our confidence,

lessen our gratitude, and embarrass our actions. Chance is an *impossibility*. Christ taught his disciples that everything is under the control of Providence. He acknowledges it in reference to his own earthly life and existence. "Mine hour is not yet come." And the Evangelist reiterates the same idea in our text. "No man laid hands on him, because his *hour* had not yet come," thus showing that even the earthly life of *Christ* was subject to the government of Providence. The Saviour traced the providence of God through the simplest operations of nature, the sustenance of the most insignificant animals, the minutest facts of life, as well as in the most stupendous affairs of the universe. God clothes the grass of the field, feeds the birds of the air, and provides for all the necessities of human life. Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? &c. It is exceedingly important that we should recognise *the universality of Providence*. Some of the advantages accruing from this are—(1) It affords us the best stand-point from which to contemplate the events of history, the seeming contingencies of life, and the operations of the whole universe. (2) To appreciate the blessings of life, to bear its many trials with moral fortitude and docile resignation. (3) To feel our absolute dependence on a personal God, and to understand more clearly the practical utility of prayer. Our being, our interests, and all the surrounding circumstances of our lives are in the hands of an all-wise and benevolent God. This belief produces in the soul stability and quiescence. How beautifully this was illustrated in the model life of Christ! How obedient and resigned he was to the will of the Father, which he recognised in all things! He was not ambitious for a premature, spasmodic popularity. He could afford to *wait* the slow development of a heavenly providence. He could declare with a calm majesty in the midst of a world of intense excitement, "My hour is not yet come." Though He knew it would be the hour of *victory*, there was nothing *hasty* in Him. The same steadfastness and humility are manifest in Him when the hour of betrayal, mock trial, and the cross,

came. He said on this occasion, "Whom seek ye?" and they said, "Jesus of Nazareth." He answered them, with the greatest courage, "*I am He.*" In the bitter cup of unutterable anguish which He was now about to drink He recognised the will of his Father, and with astonishing resignation he said, "Not *my will*, but *thine* be done. For this cause came I unto this hour." It was to Him the *hour of destiny*.

Secondly: *The futility of man's opposition to the ways of God.* Man *can* oppose God, but he cannot prevail against Him. His Maker saith unto him, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks;" "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." God's dominion over man is absolute. "The way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "Man's goings are of the Lord; how can a man then understand his own way?" Whether he obeys or disobeys, the Lord must reign. His government is supreme. "Surely the *wrath* of man shall praise thee, and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." There are two important considerations in our text which are deserving of our attention. They are these:—What a man *can do*, and what he *cannot do*. The enemies of Christ *could seek* to take Him, but they *could not lay hands on Him*. They could plot for his destruction, but they could not touch his life. They could sin against God, but they could not frustrate his fixed plan. They could rebel against his righteous government, but they could not subvert his glorious throne. They could violate his holy law, but they could not break his potent sceptre. Man, as a moral agent, *can* ruin himself, disobey God, and injure his fellow-creature; but as a *finite being* he *cannot change* the laws of nature, *reverse* the providences of heaven, nor *escape* the dominion of God. There are plans which we *cannot* disturb, laws which we cannot repeal, and circumstances which we can neither avert nor modify. We cannot resist the sovereign will of God in the government of the world and the general affairs of society, any more than we can arrest the revolution of the earth, the ebb and flow of the tide, or change the seasons of the year. Now Jesus per-

fectly understood the *stability* of the Divine plan, and rested upon it with solemnness and serenity. He knew that his precious life was not at the mercy of an infuriated mob; hence He replied to their rage, "*My hour is not yet come.*"

Thirdly: *The steadfastness of the Divine plan.* If the plan of God *cannot* be disturbed by the caprice of man or any natural contingency, then it must be perfectly *reliable*. This feature in the Divine government is absolutely essential. Without *this* the government of God could be of no practical utility to man, whose highest happiness is derived from a consciousness of safety while he reposes his trust in his Maker. The stability of the Divine plan inspires our confidence in it. Now, consider for a moment the advantage of believing that God's plan with reference to us is steadfast. (1.) *It inspires the soul to trust in God under every circumstance.* Nothing can befall us without his knowledge and consent. He is infinite in wisdom, omnipotent in power, and benevolent and unchangeable in all his ways, making all things work together for good to them that love Him. Therefore, will not we fear though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea. God superintends the conflicts of the world, and the commotion of the elements. And He has it in his power to say to them, "Peace, be still!" (2.) *It helps us to be reconciled to our lot in life.* There are many who, if they had it in their power, would *change* many of the determining circumstances of their lives, and avert many of their trials. For it is true "that a man's heart deviseth his way," and it is equally true "that it is the Lord that directeth his steps." Human life is full of variety; like the natural world, it has its sunshine and cloud, winters and summers, its violent tempests, and also its calm and tranquil hours. If we had the ordering of our own destiny, it would be peace and sunshine all the way, irrespective of our conduct. This is not God's plan. There are two reasons why the desires of our hearts run counter to the arrangements of a heavenly Providence. First, *because the vastness of God's plans are above our conception.* Hence they appear dark, severe, and

incongruous to us. We only see "parts of his ways, the mere hiding of his power." We cannot comprehend the design, effect, and nature of the operations of Providence. Our *ignorance* is the basis of our *scepticism*. Secondly, *because in the selfishness of our hearts*, we are not willing to submit to that which is contrary to our *present happiness*; though we know it to be the will of Providence. It is *painful* to mortify the flesh. The earthly life of Christ was one of intense suffering; the sky of his soul was overhung with dark and threatening clouds. But He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. He comprehended clearly all the events of his life, recognised the will of his Father in them all, and submitted to them willingly, saying: "Not *my* will, O God, but *thine* be done."

The grand lesson of life is, not to learn how to avoid its *hard work*, escape its *difficult lessons*, and avert its *bitter trials*; not to *shun* the cross, but to *bear it* with holy resignation and moral fortitude. The man that can say, "I have learnt in whatever state I am to be content," has attained the greatest resemblance to Christ. It is *this* feeling that we see so gloriously displayed by Christ when his enemies sought to lay hands on Him. Christ fully comprehended the vastness of the Divine plan, and his holy soul voluntarily acquiesced in it, notwithstanding it involved the agonies of the Garden, and the obloquy and excruciating pangs of the Cross; and for this reason He displayed that matchless serenity of mind, and that profound calmness, which characterized his life, and are expressed in his words, "My hour is not yet come."

III. THAT CHRIST'S HOUR DID NOT AFFECT THE MORAL FREEDOM OF HIS CONDUCT. Christ was not a passive victim of an unrelenting fate. He was not driven to the Cross and the grave contrary to his own will by the power of an arbitrary and irresistible decree. Christ was not a slave to his destiny. This would rob the Cross of its glory, and Christ of the infinite virtue of his matchless condescension

and obedience. The moral plans of God do not compromise or interfere with the moral freedom of any of his creatures; much less with the liberty of his Son in the work of redemption.

First: *He chose this hour.* He Himself declares, for this cause "came I unto this hour." He came to it of his own accord; it was the result of his own choice. His human life was self-assumed; He acted in all this as a perfectly free agent. This shows that moral freedom is really compatible with absolute Divine sovereignty. "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God," &c. He gave *Himself* for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, *according to the will of God.*

Secondly: *That Christ's choice of this hour proves his infinite love for us.* He was infinite in his nature, and therefore subject to no law; yet He *assumed*—"took upon him—the form of a servant," and became subject to law, "that He might redeem those who were under the law." He became subject to the same conditions of being, same circumstances, sufferings, trials, and destiny as our race; thoroughly identifying Himself with us, excepting our sins. "He was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin," that He might save us from everlasting death. He was the same being in his Divine nature that He was from eternity. It was impossible that He could change in this respect. Immutability is an essential attribute of Deity, and He had it in his power as God to control all the events of the universe, and to dispose of Himself as He willed, but He did not exercise this Divine power to prevent the occurrence of adverse circumstances, or trials, nor to lighten or ignore his human sufferings, which of course He could have done, but *voluntarily* placed Himself in the same helpless situation as ourselves. "Though he were a son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered. And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that *obey him.*" Consistently with this fact we hear Him declare "I lay down my life that I might take it up again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of *myself*; I have power

to lay it down, and I have power to take it *up again*." He did not die as a mere martyr, but as a Divine sacrifice; it was his love for us that nailed Him to the cross. The greatness of this love appears when we consider that those for whom He suffered were his enemies, and that He had a full knowledge beforehand of all that He had to endure. Yet his infinite love triumphed over all the difficulties; He was obedient unto death, even unto the death of the cross. He submitted to his destiny with docile resignation.

Thirdly : *That the manner in which Christ submitted to this destiny is a sublime model for us.* In the earthly life of Christ, we see how we ought to live. He entered into our life, let us strive to enter into his. He was treated in all things as if he were a sinner, He "was made sin for us," that we might be made righteous through Him. He was tempted, persecuted, misunderstood, hated, and contemptuously denounced as a heretic and usurper, and nailed to the cross as a malefactor; yet He was obedient even unto death. Let us not only imitate Him in his life, but let us rely upon his death for salvation.

P. L. DAVIES, A.M.

PUNISHMENT OF GUILT.

"Where shall I find a refuge?
No barbarous nation will receive a guilt
So much transcending theirs; but drive me out;
The wildest beasts will hunt me in their dens,
And birds of prey molest me in the grave."—LEE.

REPROACHES OF GUILT.

"Who can awake the dead?
Tis hence these speeches shock my midnight thoughts,
And nature's laws are broke to discompose me.
'Tis I that whirl these hurricanes in air,
And shake the earth's foundation with my guilt."—YOUNG.

A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of their widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

SUBJECT : *Paul at Cæsarea before Agrippa.*—(Continued.)

"And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came unto Cæsarea to salute Festus," &c., &c.—Acts xxv. 13—27, xxvi. 1—30.

UNDER these heads we shall have an opportunity of noticing every verse in the chapter.

First: *The opportunity afforded for his defence.* The opportunity was (1) granted by the king. "Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself." As King Agrippa occupied the highest rank in the assembly, as the guest of the procurator, he enjoyed the honour of being president on this occasion. Hence he opens the proceedings, and at last breaks up the meeting. Alas! that the reign of evil in our world should be so mighty as to give tyrants a power over a good man's tongue. "Permitted to speak!" Why, Paul had a divine right to speak, and the world stands in urgent need of his utterances. This opportunity is (2) accepted by Paul. He *promptly* accepts it. "Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself." He stretched forth his hand, either because it was the usual attitude of ancient orators, or to indicate that he intended addressing himself exclusively to Agrippa; or in order, by the chain that was on his hand fastening him to the guard, to remind all in the court of his unjust and cruel confinement. This opportunity to speak he *gratefully* accepted. "I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer

for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews." It was gratifying to the apostle to be permitted to speak at all on this occasion, for he had much that lay on his conscience to say; much that would throw light upon his history and his religion. But it was especially gratifying to him to be able to speak on this occasion before Agrippa. "Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently." This was not the language of cringing flattery, but of truthful courtesy. King Agrippa "*was expert*," literally a *knower* of Jewish customs and questions, and this to Paul was a great advantage. The Roman magistrates, Felix and Festus, before whom he had defended himself, knew little or nothing about Jewish customs and questions; they were, therefore, incompetent to form an accurate judgment. Agrippa, on the other hand, was "*expert*" in all these matters. He was a Jew, who had lived a considerable time amongst his own people, and who understood the doctrines and rites of their fathers.

Secondly: *The substantial parts of his defence.* He begins his defence by a broad statement of his strong and constant Jewish orthodoxy. "My manner of life from my youth, which was at the first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee." He here asserts that he was *well known* amongst the Jews. Though born at Tarsus, he had been sent early in life to Jerusalem to study in the school of Gamaliel. (Chap. xxii. 3.) He lived from youth up to his conversion not in an obscure province of the country, but in the heart of the metropolis. He asserts that he is well known among the Jews as one the strictest of Pharisees after the most straitest sect—an *anomalous pleonasm* not found in the original—"of our religion." No sect was so scrupulous in the observance, not only of the Mosaic rituals, but also of all traditional customs; and Paul was of the strictest of these Pharisees. He asserts that his Pharisaism

was a *vital thing*—"I lived a Pharisee." Judaism, to him, was not a mere letter, profession, or ceremonial, it was his life; he lived it, embodied it in his every day actions. It would seem from his language that he was one of the most fanatical of the Pharisees. In looking at the various parts of his defence here, there are five facts which he propounds.

First: *That the thing for which they accused him was the great belief of the Jewish nation.* Paul believed in a Messiah, so did the whole Jewish people. "And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers: unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come; for which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?"

These verses contain three great truths. (1.) That the Messiah in whom he believed was the grand "*hope*" of the Jewish people. It was (a) founded on a divine promise: "*The promise made of God.*" The Old Testament abounds with divine promises of the Messiah.* (b) It was a hope mightily influential. It was mighty in its *extent*; all had it. "Unto which promise our twelve tribes"—the whole Jewish people. It was mighty in its intensity, "instantly serving God day and night." "Day and night," with unwearied zeal they attended to all the ceremonies of the Jewish religion, hoping for the Messiah. Even to this day the hope of the Messiah burns in the hearts of the Jewish people throughout the world. The disappointments of ages have not quenched it; it flames on. Another truth implied here is, (2) That the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth from the dead demonstrated that his Messiah was the true one. This seems to be implied in the eighth verse: "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" The

* Gen. iii. 15, xii. 18, xlix. 10; Deut. xviii. 15; 2 Samuel vii. 12; Psa. cxxxiii. 11; Isa. iv. 11, vii. 14, ix. 6, 7; Jer. xxiii. 15, xxxv. 14—16; Ezekiel xxxiv. 23; Daniel ix. 24; Micah vii. 14; Zechariah xiii. 1—7; Malachi iii. 1.

resurrection of Christ from the dead, and not the general resurrection, is what is referred to here. This, to Paul, was the crowning proof of Christ's Messiahship. (3.) That his resurrection from the dead was the grand difficulty of the Jews. They would not accept it though they could not deny it. The proofs instead of winning them to the new faith, exasperated them. The language of the apostle implies that it was to the last degree absurd for them to consider the thing "incredible." "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" Or, using the first word as an exclamation, "What! should it be thought a thing incredible with you that God should raise the dead?" Can it be possible that any rational being can question God's power to raise the dead? Another fact that comes out in Paul's character is—

Secondly: *That the cause he now espoused he once hated as much as they did.* He understood their prejudices, for they were once his own. "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them, and I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and, being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." Two facts he here states concerning himself. (1.) As a well known Pharisee, he conscientiously set himself in opposition to Jesus of Nazareth. The ninth verse should be read as connected with the fifth, and the words "so then" should be substituted for "verily." The idea is that, because he was an inveterate Pharisee, he thought himself bound to oppose Jesus of Nazareth. As if he had said, "While I lived a Pharisee, I thought that I owed it to my country, to my religion, to my God, to oppose to the utmost of my power the claims of Jesus as the Messiah. Paul as a Pharisee was conscientious." Conscientiousness is not virtue. (2.) He manifested his opposition by

the most violent persecution of Christ's disciples. He describes himself as feeling "exceedingly mad against them." So furious was his indignation, that he raged like a madman; his ferocity overcame his reason. He gives a few specimens of his heartless cruelty towards them. He "shut them up in prison," he voted for their death. "When they were put to death, I gave my voice against them." Perhaps he was a member of the Sanhedrim, and always voted for their ruin. "He punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme," forced them to curse the name of Christ, and "persecuted them even unto strange cities." Another fact that comes out in Paul's defence is—

Thirdly : *That the change effected in him, and the commission he received, were manifestly divine.* As to the change it is thus described : "Whereupon, as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests, at mid-day, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them that journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." This is the third account of his conversion, and as it agrees substantially with the other accounts, which we have before noticed, we need offer no further observations. The commission that he received at the time of his conversion, which was undoubtedly divine, we have in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth verses. "But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins,

and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." In these verses some things are ascribed to the Saviour which, in the former narrative, are put into the mouth of Ananias. The reason of this may be, either because these words were uttered by the Lord, and then repeated by Ananias, or because the distinction between what came directly, or indirectly from the same source, Paul considered as unessential to notice. They present to us three things concerning the ministry the apostle now received. (1) The *theme* of his ministry. What had he to witness or testify? (a) All that he *had* seen of Christ. "That which thou hast seen." He had seen and heard great things amidst the bright light which struck him to the ground. (b) All that he *should* see of Christ, "And of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." He would receive many more communications, and these were to become the theme of his ministry. A true ministry will be always receiving fresh communications of truth, and he must proclaim the new as well as the old. "The Lord hath yet more light and truth to break forth from his word." (2.) The *sphere* of his ministry; "Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee." The word "*delivering*" is understood by some not in the sense of rescuing, but in the sense of *selecting*. Both ideas are true; concerning Paul, Christ rescued him from dangers to which he was exposed, both from the Jews and the Gentiles, and Christ also selected him from the great multitude of both as his minister. "Unto whom now I send thee." The Gentile world was the great sphere for Paul. He was an apostle for the Gentiles. (3) The *beneficence* of his ministry. "To open their eyes," &c., &c. He had to effect (a) the highest good: he had to impart spiritual renovation, soul deliverance, divine forgiveness, eternal blessedness. (b) He had to effect the highest good by faith in Christ. "By faith in me."* Another fact that comes out in Paul's defence is—

Fourthly: *That the discharge of the mission he received at*

* See HOMILIST, second series, vol. iv. page 100.

his conversion was the cause of the persecution he was now enduring. "Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judæa, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me." Observe how he discharged this commission.

(1) Self-denyingly. "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." The expression seems to imply that if he had yielded to selfish motives, he would have recoiled from a mission of such terrible responsibilities and hardships. "When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, I conferred not with flesh and blood." (2) Contiguously. He began where he was converted, and went on first to Damascus, to Jerusalem, throughout all the regions of Judæa, and then to the Gentiles. This is the true order. Begin with those nearest at hand, then gradually on. (3) Reformatively. His grand aim was spiritually to reform men, that "they should repent and return to God, and do works meet for repentance." A reform including two things—(a) a renewed mind, a thorough change—repenting and turning; (b) a renewed life. "Works meet for repentance:" the conduct answering the new state of the soul. This was his work, and because he did this, he says to Agrippa, "The Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me." This was his only crime. Another fact in Paul's defence is—

Fifthly: *That all that He had done was by Divine help, irrespective of persons, and in strict accordance with the Old Testament.* "Having, therefore, obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come. That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."

(1) It was by divine help that he carried on his mission. "Having obtained help of God." He had been in many

dangers, and amidst many ills, and he could only trace his deliverance to God. His escapes are often miraculous. (2) It was irrespective of persons that he carried on his mission. "Small and great." Small and great in stature, in mind, in social standing. His religion knew no distinction of persons, nor did he. All men were lost, and he sought their salvation. He was not too proud to speak to the meanest, nor too cowardly to address the greatest. (3) It was in strict accordance with the Old Testament that he carried on his mission. He said, "none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come." He delivered no new doctrine. He simply says the prophecies concerning Christ have been fulfilled. The prophets declared that Christ should suffer. (Dan. ix. 7; Isa. liii.) "Paul," says Lange, "puts the object of the biblical promise in an interrogative form (ver. 23), because it was disputed by the Jews. There were these three questions:—

1. Whether the Messiah is *παθὴρὸς*—i.e., not only capable of suffering, but subjected to suffering, *necessitate patiendi obnoxius*—so throughout in the classical *usus loquendi*.
2. Whether the Messiah will rise again, and be the first in the domain of the resurrection.
3. Whether the Messiah will announce light (salvation) not only to the people of Israel, but also to the Gentiles. The two last thoughts are grammatically fused into one question, but, according to the nature of the subject, are to be regarded as separate." The words have been thus paraphrased: "Through the help of God, I have maintained my ground to this day, bearing witness of the truth to men of all conditions, and discussing the great question, whether the Messiah of the prophecies was to die and rise again, before He could be set forth as a Saviour both to Jews and Gentiles."

Thirdly: *The immediate consequence of his defence.* The remainder of the chapter shows us the influence that this wonderful defence of Paul had upon Festus, Agrippa, and the court. Let us notice. (1) The influence upon Festus. The impression produced upon the mind of Festus was, that Paul

had lost his reason, "And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad." Notice (a) the charge of Festus. The charge against Paul was mental derangement. He did not denounce him as a hypocrite, or a knave, but rather as a brainless fanatic. It is not necessary to believe that his "loud voice" meant insolence or contempt, it may only mean earnestness. This impression, though false, might have been sincere. The charge of madness against the earnest advocates of Christianity is *very easy, very common, and very foolish*. Easy—it requires no thought, no reflection: nothing is less difficult than to dispose of great questions in this way. Common—it is what the careless and the profligate are constantly alleging against earnest teachers. Foolish—because no class of men are influenced by higher reason than the genuine advocates of religion. Posterity has long since decided who was the madman, Paul or Festus. Notice (b) the reply of Paul. Paul in reply *respectfully denies the charge*. "I am not mad, most noble Festus." "Most noble," Paul intended not to apply, of course, to the man's *personal* character, but to his *official* position. Paul, in his reply, describes the true character of his teaching. "Words of truth and soberness;" truth here stands opposed to falsehood, and soberness to mental derangement. "I speak," as if Paul had said, "the words of *reality* and the words of *reason*." Again, Paul in his reply, obliquely rebukes Festus. He turns from him as if he would ignore his existence, and addresses himself to the king, saying, "For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner." As if Paul had said to Festus, "It is not surprising that you cannot understand me, you are not a Jew. You have already misunderstood me; I am not speaking to you, but to the king. For the king knoweth of these things," &c. In thus acknowledging the king's acquaintance with the subject, Paul's aim was not to flatter the monarch, but to humble Festus. Let us notice, (2) The influence of the

defence upon Agrippa. Paul appeals now directly to the king. "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest." He makes this appeal, perhaps, for two reasons:—to meet the charge of derangement that Festus had made, and to bring in the testimony of Agrippa, who understood the subject, to support his position: and also to strike on the conscience of Festus the great question of religion, "Believest thou the prophets? He does not wait for an answer, but with great oratoric skill he gives the answer himself, "I know that thou believest." But what was the effect upon the mind of Agrippa? (a) A partial interest in Christianity, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." These words of Agrippa have received different interpretations. Some have regarded them as expressing a trivial jest, a bitter sarcasm, a grave irony, a burst of anger, and some an expression of sincere conviction. Corresponding, says an able modern critic, to these different conceptions of the temper in which the words were uttered, are the senses put upon the words themselves, or rather on the first two words in Greek (*ἐν ὀλίγῳ*), which might be literally rendered, *in a few*, but that this word is exclusively employed with plural nouns, whereas the Greek word is a singular in form and meaning, and may, therefore, be translated *in a little*. *Almost*, the common English version, although very ancient, is immediately derived from the Geneva Bible, being found in none of older date. It supposes the Greek phrase to mean, within a little, wanting a little, or the like, in which sense, several kindred phrases are employed, but not the very one here used. Another objection to it is, that it requires the corresponding phrase in Paul's reply to mean *altogether*, which it never does elsewhere. Adhering to the strict sense, *in a little*, some supply *time*, in a little while, or soon; but this requires the present tense (*thou persuadest*) to be taken as a future, and the corresponding phrase (Ver. 29) to mean, in a long time. Still more unnatural is the explanation of some recent writers, "with little trouble," "easily," which not only takes the words in an unusual sense,

but assumes irony, of which there is no other intimation. By far the best and most satisfactory interpretation, although not even mentioned by some modern writers, is the one found in the oldest English versions, in a little, *i.e.*, in a small degree (Tyndale and Cranmer, *somewhat*.) The idea then is, "Thou persuadest me a little [or in some degree] to become a Christian," *i.e.*, I begin to feel the force of your persuasive arguments, and if I hear you longer, do not know what the effect may be." * The reply of Paul to the king has a moral grandeur beyond description. "And Paul said, "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds." This forms a sublime peroration of this great defence, and a magnificent close to all his apologies. They include two things, (1) A consciousness of moral superiority; "Altogether such as *I am*," implying that he felt that though a bondsman he was greater, nobler, happier, than the king and all before him. He was "Heir of God and a joint heir with Christ." (2) A Spirit of the highest philanthropy. It is a *praying* philanthropy. "I would to God." It was a *forgiving* philanthropy. He desired the good of all his enemies, and nothing but their good; he would have all of them to enjoy his privileges, but none to share his bonds. It was a *universal* philanthropy. "Not only thou, but all that hear me this day." (3) The influence that Paul's defence had on the court. "And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them. And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, this man doeth nothing worthy of death, or of bonds. Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar." "This man doeth nothing worthy of death, or of bonds." This seemed to be the impression of all; on that occasion Paul demonstrated his innocence to the conviction of all.

* See HOMILIST, *in loco*.

Germs of Thought.

SUBJECT: *Harvest Home a National Festival.*

"Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from such time as thou beginnest to put the sickle to the corn. And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God with a tribute of a free-will offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the Lord thy God, according as the Lord thy God hath blessed thee: and thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you, in the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to place his name there. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt: and thou shalt observe and do these statutes."—Deut. xvi. 9—12.

"When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands. When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow."—Deut. xxiv. 19—21.

Analysis of Homily the Seven Hundred and Sixty-Sixth.

HARVEST to the Jews was an event of great and general interest. It was the occasion of one of their grand national festivals. This feast was called by different names—the Feast of Weeks, the Feast of Harvest, and the Feast of First-fruits. From the commencement to the close of their harvest festivities included seven weeks. It continued from the Passover until the Pentecost, and the opening and the close were nationally celebrated. At the close of this festivity, an offering was presented to God of the entire crops as actually gathered and ready for use. This was done by the high priest, having two loaves made of the best crop, not of barley meal, but of fine flour, and baked in the usual manner with leaven; the leaven in this case not being regarded as a separate ingredient or in its character as leaven, but being simply viewed as an essential

part of the concrete result—baked loaves. Nor were they placed upon the altar, to which the prohibition about leaven strictly referred, but waved before the Lord by the priest in the name of the congregation. But in addition to this wave offering, as the people were enjoined to give “the first of all the fruit of the land to the Lord” (Deut. xxvi. 2), since from Him the whole had been derived, it was ordered that at this feast they should bring an offering of the first-fruits of their produce, each according to his ability and the purpose of his heart. No definite amount or proportionate contribution was fixed; it was declared to be “a tribute of a free-will offering of their hand, which they were to give according as the Lord their God had blessed them. (Deut. xvi. 10.) But the offering itself was laid as a matter of obligation upon each man’s conscience; hence the exhortation of Solomon, “Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase.” (Prov. iii. 9.) Jewish writers relate that the form of confession and thanksgiving found in Deut. xxvi. 5, was commonly used on the occasion. We learn from the passage before us—

I. THAT THE HARVEST HOME WAS A SEASON FOR NATIONAL GRATITUDE. “Thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the Lord thy God with a tribute of a free-will offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give unto the Lord thy God.” As a token of their obligation for his goodness in the productions of the earth, they presented to Him, not only of the best that grew out of the earth, but of the choicest of their flocks. (Lev. xxiii. 18—20.) What they offered conferred no favour on Him, it was his own, but it expressed the sense of their obligation and the depth of their gratitude. Is there not everything in the harvest to fill and fire the human heart with gratitude to Him who crowneth the year with his goodness? Three things are necessary to the very existence of gratitude towards the giver.

First: *That the gift should be felt to be valuable.* A thing of trifling value which can render us little or no service, has

little or no power to awaken thanksgiving. But the harvest, what a gift is that! It is the life of the world. Let the soil be sterile for one year, let the fields yield no fruit, let autumn come bearing in its hands no fresh supplies from God. And what a calamity! In a few months famine would depopulate our cities and make desolate our earth. If the nation valued a good harvest according to its worth, its heart would break forth in songs of gratitude and praise. Another thing essential to the very existence of gratitude is—

Secondly: *A belief that the favour is benevolently bestowed.* A man may confer a favour on another from vanity or selfishness, or some other feeling foreign to the generous, in that case, however valuable may be his gift, whatever service it may render it will never awaken gratitude. I must believe in the kind feeling that dictated the gift before I can be thankful to the giver. Is not the harvest a gift benevolently bestowed? What motive, but disinterested and unbounded benevolence, could influence the Almighty in giving to the world its plentiful harvest? He does it because He is good to all, and his “tender mercies are over all the works of his hand.” Another thing essential to the existence of gratitude, is—

Thirdly: *A consciousness that the favour is undeserved.* If I feel that I deserved the benefit that was conferred upon me, that to withhold it from me would be an injustice, I could never feel gratitude. Do men deserve the harvest? What claim have they to the favour of that God whose laws they have violated, whose arrangements they have outraged, whose authority they have contemned? The harvest, then, supplies all the conditions of gratitude strong enough to prompt us to consecrate all we have and all we are to Him. We learn from the passage before us—

II. THAT THE HARVEST HOME IS A SEASON FOR NATIONAL REJOICING. “And thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God, thou and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maid-servant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the

widow, that are among you, in the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to place his name there." Amongst the Jews all were engaged as reapers in the harvest field, parents and children, masters and servants, young men and maidens, old men and children, all were there, and all were joyous. The laugh of mirth and the song of joy rang through every field. The "joy of the harvest" was proverbial, Indeed, where there is gratitude, there will be joy; gratitude is praise, and praise is heaven. The revelation of the Creator in the harvest field may well make human hearts exult. The God of the harvest there appears, mercifully considerate of the wants of his creatures—as a loving Father with a bountiful hand furnishing the table with abundant supplies for his children. There He appears punctual to the fulfilment of his promise. "Seed time and harvest shall not fail." This was a promise He made thousands of years ago, and this promise He has never broken. Amidst all the fallacies and mutations of the world, men find in the harvest field One whose word never faileth, whose truth endureth through all generations. Every trembling ear of corn seems to whisper to the human heart, "Trust in him who liveth for ever." There He appears rewarding human labour. The men who broke up the fallow ground and who went forth weeping, bearing precious seed, now returned rejoicing, bearing their sheaves with them. God has rewarded their labour. God wished the Jews to be happy in the harvest, and the harvest is in every way adapted to inspire them with joy. God seeks the happiness of his creatures; the ever-blessed God works evermore through his universe to make his creatures blessed. We learn from the passage before us—

III. THAT THE HARVEST HOME IS A SEASON FOR NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY. "When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the works of thine hands. When thou

beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again ; it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow ; when thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it afterward : it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow." And observe—

First : *That where God gives liberally, He demands liberality.* In the harvest-field his bountihood is seen. There his goodness deals lavishly with man ; and there man is taught in language, silent but strong, the duty of imitating the liberality of his Creator. We are commanded to give as God hath prospered us. God says to the man whom He has prospered in the world, "Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy unto our Lord." Observe—

Secondly : *That the liberality demanded is to be shown to the poor.* Neither the corn field nor the vineyard were to be gleaned. What was left by the reaper and the grape-gatherer was to remain for the poor. The poor have existed almost from the beginning, and everywhere in the Old Testament God inculcates practical commiseration for the poor. Although poverty may be generally ascribed to human causes, it seems in a sense to be a divine ordination. God hath planted the poor amongst all peoples, in order that the benevolence of the rich may have scope for development. To neglect the poor was considered a great sin in Old Testament times. "If," said Job, "I have withheld the poor from their desire," &c. (Job. xxxi. 16—23.)

The spiritual suggestions and lessons connected with the harvest-field are pointed out in various places elsewhere in the HOMILIST. (See for example, Vol. VIII., Series III., page 168.)

SUBJECT : *Nature a Preacher.*

"The heavens declare the glory of God ; and the firmament sheweth his handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world. In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun," &c.—Psa. xix. 1—4.

Analysis of Family the Seven Hundred and Sixty-Seventh.

GOD has given man two great revelations of Himself—nature and the Bible. Though one is much older than the other, there is a perfect agreement between them so far as they go together. They reveal the same God, the same morality, the same religion. This psalm refers to both. The text refers to the revelation of nature as a Preacher. Nature is here presented, and we have five subjects for thought—

I. THE SUBJECT OF ITS DISCOURSE. "The glory of God." The glory of God is the sum of his perfections. Nature proclaims God's existence, government, and attributes. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead ; so that they are without excuse." (1.) The fact of nature reveals the being of God. (2.) The vastness of nature the immensity of God. (3.) The uniformity of nature the unity of God. (4.) The regularity of nature the unchangeableness of God. (5.) The arrangements of nature the wisdom of God. (6.) The happiness of nature the goodness of God. (7.) The purity of nature the holiness of God. (8.) The beauty of nature the tastefulness of God. (9.) The variety of nature the exhaustlessness of God. God's glory is the grand subject of revelation, the grand subject for the intelligent creation to contemplate and adore.

II. THE INCESSANTNESS OF ITS DELIVERY. "Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge." Nature as a preacher never tires, never pauses. There has

been no break in nature's sermon from the beginning. Every day it proceeds in its eloquent disquisitions. Every sunbeam, every breeze, every cloud, are but the echoes of its voice. Nor does this preacher cease when the day is over. "Night unto night" it proceeds. What do the heavens say at night? Our serenity is the effect of his smile, our air is the breath of his nostrils, our lights are the radiations of his effulgence.

"What though in solemn silence all," &c.

Thus whilst generations come and go, whilst empires rise and pass away and ages run their course, this great preacher continues his sublime discourse without a break or pause.

III. THE INTELLIGIBILITY OF ITS LANGUAGE—"sheweth forth knowledge." Its language is that of symbol:—the easiest language for man to understand; the first that is addressed to him. It is a language of signs—a language addressed to the eye and the heart. Every object in the heavens above or on the earth beneath, small or great, is a sentence embodying an idea. By the language of nature, the language of symbols, the invisible things, says Paul, "are clearly seen." So intelligible is the language that there is no excuse for ignorance of God. No heathen can plead the lack of means as a justification for his ignorance. "Day unto day and night unto night nature speaks to him in a language which addresses his senses and his soul.

IV. THE VASTNESS OF ITS AUDIENCE. "Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world." Their "line"—that is, their instruction. All men live under those heavens, all of which are vocal with discourse of God. There is no speech, nor language, no tribe, nor class of men where this sermon is not heard. Nature speaks to every man about God. What a congregation nature preaches to, how vast and how varied!

V. THE IMMENSITY OF ITS RESOURCES. "In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun: which is as a bridegroom

coming out of his chamber, and rejoicing as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the end of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." First: *The greatest light dwells in the heart of this preacher.* The sun, whose distance from the earth is ninety-five millions of miles, and whose diameter is eight hundred and eighty thousand miles, and whose fire lights, heats, and controls our system, has his pavilion in those heavens that declare the glory of God, &c. Secondly: *The greatest light circulates through the whole being of this preacher.* In his joyous and majestic career he sweeps its immeasurable expanse. "His going forth is from the end of the heavens," &c. This sun is not only the offspring and symbol, but the radiation of the great fountain of intelligence—"the Father of lights."

From this subject we may learn—

First: *Man's capacity to study and to worship God.* Would the Infinite continue day after day and night after night to make this revelation of Himself, had we not the capacity to know and to adore Him? No! this capacity we have, and this is the glory of our nature. We, of all the creatures on this earth, have the faculty to see the invisible through the visible. We learn—

Secondly: *Man's obligation to study and to worship God.* Woe be to us if we close our eyes and ears to the glorious communications which He makes to us. Study nature *scientifically*. This is wise, useful, and right. But above all, study it *religiously*. Listen to its voice with filial love and loyal reverence.

"Read Nature; Nature is a friend to Truth;
Nature is Christian: preaches to mankind,
And bids dead matter aid us in our creed."—YOUNG.

Misapplied Texts.

By Rev. WM. WEBSTER, M.A., late Fellow of Queen's College,
Cambridge. Joint Editor of Webster and Wilkinson's
Greek Testament, &c., &c.

(No. III.)

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."—Rom. xiv. 23.

FEW passages have been more extensively misapplied than this. It has been interpreted as referring to all those actions which Augustine calls "*splendida peccata*"—all works however virtuous, commendable, benevolent, or useful, which spring not from faith in Jesus Christ; so that the language of Jer. vi. 30 has been freely applied: "Reprobate silver shall men call them, for the Lord hath rejected them."

This application of the text is strengthened by the language of the Church of England in her thirteenth article, and by the incautious comments of many who have written expositions on the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion. We are there told of works which precede justification, "for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but that they have the nature of sin"; *peccati rationem habere non dubitamus*.

There is here no express mention made of Rom. xiv. 23, which very naturally occurs to our mind from some similarity in sound and sense; but the matter under discussion differs so widely, that we are not warranted in assuming that this passage was present to the minds of those who drew up this article. Indeed, the expression that certain works "have the nature of sin," is very tame, weak, and feeble, in contrast with the direct, pointed, and unqualified proposition. "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." The article determines that in order for works to be acceptable to God, they must be done by his grace, and must spring from a principle of faith. It will be admitted by all, that the spirit which leads a man to rely on his own unassisted efforts as rendering him meet to receive grace, is sin, because it involves a denial of human infirmity, of the atonement of Christ, and of the need of the Spirit's help. But St. Paul is speaking throughout this chapter on a very different subject. Before we venture to

extend his words beyond the occasion which called them forth, we must have clear views of what that occasion was, which will at once direct us to the peculiar and local sense in which he uses the word faith.

In the beginning of this chapter we read, "Him that is weak in the faith, receive ye." To be weak in the faith, is to have a narrow comprehension of the extent, harmony, and design of Christianity; it denotes the condition of a babe in Christ, of one who is a child in understanding, one who is troubled and perplexed with needless fears, and scruples; as the apostle goes on to explain (ver. 2—6) when the conscience is morbidly sensitive, and the judgment inadequately enlightened. Such Christians we are carefully to abstain from censuring or condemning; we are to pass no unfavourable judgment upon them; we have to adopt this judgment rather; to put no stumbling-block, or occasion to fall, in their way; no πρόσκομμα, no large obstacle, which denotes a certain cause of falling; no σκανδαλον, no trap for their feet, which denotes a probable cause of falling (ver. 13). We are to walk according to the law of love (ver. 15); for although no meat is unclean of itself, yet if a brother is distressed (λυπείται) because we set what he considers to be a bad example, an example which he feels himself bound to resist; we inflict on him serious injury. We ought to use our strength of faith (τὸ ἀγαθόν ver. 16) by which we have overcome old prejudices and acquired Christian liberty, so that no one may speak reproachfully; we ought to avoid everything by which a brother stumbles, or is in danger of falling, or is weakened by distress of mind at our example. Hast thou faith? says the apostle (ver. 22). Hast thou a firm conviction as in the sight of God that no kind of meat is unclean; be content to feel that you have this liberty; that you are free from the doubts, the scruples, the infirmities of those who are weak in faith. It may be sufficient satisfaction for you to have this firm conviction as in the sight of God, you need not parade this liberty in the sight of your brother by habitual exercise. The apostle goes on to intimate the great improbability of any one attaining or retaining this firm conviction in every case which may arise. There may still be conflict between his conscience and his judgment. "Happy is he who has no inward misgiving, whose heart condemns him not in the practice of that which he approves," which after trial and deep consideration he sanctions (δοκιμάζει) and pronounces to be right. He who is in a doubtful state

of mind stands condemned, if ever he eats of the meat in question, because he has not a full persuasion of the lawfulness of the act, and every act of this kind which proceeds not from a conviction that it is lawful and charitable is sin. For, as the apostle proceeds to teach (xv. 1), the strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please themselves. The stronger could adopt the practice of the weaker without injury to himself or others. The weaker could not adopt the practice of the stronger without detriment and danger. The stronger could abstain and yet enjoy the sense of liberty to eat; by abstaining he did not act against his conscience, nor come into condemnation. The weaker could not eat without losing the sense of rectitude, violating his conscience and passing into a state of condemnation.

Moses writes (Deut. iv. 2), "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish from it." Many will admit that the interpretation I have given above is the genuine meaning of the passage, but will contend that the ordinary interpretation is even an improvement upon the genuine. They thus add to the word of God, and represent Paul as saying what the Spirit of God speaking by his mouth, never intended he should say in this passage. While thus they add, they in effect diminish; they direct the minds of men to many difficult and speculative questions with which this text has no concern, and divert the attention from plain practical lessons it suggests for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. The application of the passage to our business and bosoms in modern times is too wide a subject for me to enter upon at present.



FEARS ARISING FROM GUILT.

"From the body of one guilty deed
A thousand ghostly fears and haunting thoughts proceed."

WORDSWORTH.

Texts Philosophically Illustrated.

EXTRACTS FROM "THE POSSIBILITIES OF CREATION."

SUBJECT: *Labour a Necessity of Being.*

"And the Lord took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden, to dress and to keep it."—Gen. ii. 15.

TOIL is evidently the condition on which we are permitted to occupy this earth. Food is a matter of daily requirement, and therefore man must plough, reap, grind, bake, tend cattle, and perform a hundred other duties for the gratification of the stomach alone.

"The sustenance of nature hidden lies;
The gods have cover'd it from human eyes;
Else had one day bestow'd sufficient cheer,
And, though inactive, fed thee through the year.
Then might thy hand have laid the rudder by,
In blackening smoke for ever hung on high.
Then had the labouring ox foregone the soil,
The patient mules had found reprieve from toil;
But Jove our food conceal'd."

ÆSOP: *Works and Days.*

We have to wrestle with the weather, and therefore stone must be quarried, timber sawn, houses built, and many other kindred processes pursued. The cold is apt to pinch us, and therefore we raise an army of operatives to enable us to set it at defiance, and to manage the various arts of clothing. We are cooking creatures, and must therefore dig for fuel, and as we need numerous metals for our manufactures, we have to mine the ground in all directions. Seas roll between our continents, and, to traverse these, ships must be constructed, and thousands of men enlisted in the service of commerce. Body, mind, spirit—all have their peculiar cravings, and peculiar distempers, and therefore to meet their necessities, or check their disorders, we are compelled to employ a host of functionaries, from a prison-turnkey up to an archbishop or an emperor. In short, nature seems to say to every one who enters this world: "Sir, you must work. Whether you make shoes, preach sermons, or enact laws, I expect you to toil. To nineteen men out of twenty, I give no other capital

than their muscles and brains, and even to those who talk of their 'little independency' there are tasks assigned, which, if properly understood, and still more, if properly discharged, will not leave them an idle day as long as they live."

Let it be announced, however, that on the 1st January, A.D. 1900, there will be no further necessity for *hard* labour in this planet. The sweat need no more hang in thick drops on the brow of humanity, for the sinews of the race will be emancipated from the bondage in which they have hitherto been made to serve. The primitive curse being uplifted from the earth the soil will bring forth corn and fruits as spontaneously as it now produces thorns and thistles. Perhaps the day has come when, according to the prediction of Mercier, a French writer, chemistry has succeeded in "extracting a nutritive principle from all bodies," and it is "as easy for man to provide for his subsistence, as it is for him to draw water from the river." Or, let us suppose that like the magician in the Hindoo poem, who was requested by a young monarch to procure him a splendid coronation banquet, each man could mutter spells which would bring the antelopes to the door of his larder, drag the fish from the river and the ocean, darken the air with coveys of feathered game, and furnish him in a moment with all manner of dainty creatures, eager to be cooked and eaten. Food, in fact should be supplied so readily that people might almost make their dinners as Thomson the poet made his dessert, by nibbling at the fruit suspended from the trees, whilst both hands were lazily buried in his pockets. It is further ordered that on the aforesaid 1st January, 1900, all mills and factories shall be stopped; the shutters of each shop shall be closed, and the apprentices released; all husbandmen and labourers shall be discharged; our armies and navies shall be disbanded, and the very functionaries of Government, upon whom fate has imposed the cruel duty of signing their names occasionally and receiving their salaries quarterly, will be permitted to rest from their herculean exertions.

How this change could be accomplished—how any repeal of the great curse could be safely adopted—it would puzzle mortal ingenuity to explain. We might imagine, perhaps, that if the temperature of the earth were altered on the day in question, and its standard warmth fixed at some agreeable point, all persons concerned in the manufacture of clothing, with the exception of a small body of fig-leaf tailors and

milliners, might be dismissed from their occupations, though unquestionably it is difficult to conceive how our dandies could thrive in a world where there were no fashionable coats to be exhibited, or, still more, how our ladies could exist if there were no "loves of shawls," or "ducks of bonnets," or immeasurable expanses of crinoline to wear. We should still want cabs and trains even if the millennium were to set in to-morrow, for how could we fly about London, or take a run down to Edinburgh, without their assistance, unless we were furnished with wings? and this is a stage of development which even the authors of the "Vestiges of Creation" themselves would scarcely venture to anticipate. And if cabs and trains were needed in a millennial state, there must also be industrious cabmen and perspiring stokers and pokers to work them, as there are in the present anything-but millennial age. Let these difficulties pass, however, for the present. The question is, what changes would be produced in society after the 1st January, 1900? For a fortnight or a month, perhaps, the world would be right merry. The collier would emerge from his pit, and the weaver would bid good-bye to his loom; the sailor would run his ship ashore, and the porter leave his burden in the middle of the street; the clerk would fly from the desk to which he had been chained for years like a galley-slave, and the lawyer might even cease to make out his voluminous bills of costs, however unwilling, in general, to forego that labour of love.

Pleasant state of things this! Would not the sons of toil toss their caps high in the air, and scamper to and fro like school-boys just released to enjoy some unexpected holiday?

Not so fast, however. Long before the end of that fortnight or month many of these operatives would certainly be drunk. Masons would be deep in liquor, and the tailoring craft would probably be rolling in the gutter. The first consequence of such a cessation would probably be that the planet would get tipsy and conduct itself so grossly that it would deserve to be committed to the house of correction.

Grant, however, that the human race had "taken the pledge," and were living on total abstinence principles, still the question would be, how should we find employment for our time? There is a terrible bugbear known by the name of *Ennui*. Enter the house of some wealthy man, where you find everything that luxury can wish or money can procure. To see him at his stately meal, surrounded by flattering

friends, attended by obsequious retainers, you would fancy that he at any rate—petted son of fortune!—ought to enjoy a calm and comfortable mind. But look more narrowly at his countenance. There hangs a shadow on his brow, there is sadness deeply seated in his eye. Why so? If your vision were opened so as to discover the spectres of the mind you would observe a horrible phantom, not intruding for the moment like Banquo's ghost and then vanishing as suddenly as it appeared, but mounting guard over its victim with merciless pertinacity, and poisoning every joy with its foul presence. To escape its persecutions he has galloped over the Continent, made a yacht voyage to Spitzbergen, crossed the Sahara, clambered up Mount Ararat, and sat through several sessions of Parliament. But having no settled pursuit, his energies have turned acid in his breast, and now he has become the prey of a pitiless goblin, which dogs his steps wherever he goes, and thrusts its marrowless form into his company at the very banqueting board.

What, then, would become of mankind if, in imitation of some Socialist dreamers, we were to pass an Act for the universal abolition of labour?

Some of us would play at chess, some at cards, some at cricket. Others would hunt, fish, shoot, go to India to kill tigers, or to Africa to bag elephants. Inspired by a strong craving for sport, which would necessarily increase in intensity when the mind had no set occupation to tax or interest its powers, we should fly to any species of amusement, however cruel or frivolous, in order to keep the demons of melancholy at bay. For this reason cock-fighting, badger-baiting, bull-battles, and even gladiatorial massacres, might soon become the pastimes of the most polished nations. To few persons, indeed, would a life of pure recreation be a benefit; whilst to the majority of mortals, it would operate as a fatal incentive to the wickedness which lurks in the soul, but is kept down by the iron necessities of labour. Some people, of course, would turn their leisure to valuable account. Good men who have made over their hearts to humanity, and who live as her devoted vassals, and great men who hold their genius in trust for their fellow-creatures, would undoubtedly avail themselves of their discharge from toil, to work for mankind in the most excellent way. But the good and great are comparatively few.

Thirdly, however, if society escaped for a time the miseries

which idleness or unemployed passions would naturally produce, it must ultimately suffer to such an extent that its return to barbarism would be inevitably compelled. Granting even that the claims of that important viscus, the stomach, could be met in some magical way, so as to relieve us from the drudgery which it imposes, still there are hundreds of arts and occupations which would be ruined if the race were to strike work. Man does not live by bread alone. He must be educated, for example ; but if you wanted to send your children to school, would you not be disappointed to find that the master had locked his doors ; that all the private tutors in the kingdom had taken the benefit of the Act of Abolition, and that no governesses could be had for your girls, capable of teaching every accomplishment, at the low charge of twenty guineas per annum ? You wish to read your *Times* as usual ; but editors, sub-editors, penny-a-liners, compositors, and their attendant demons, have all disappeared ; the world, in fact, is coming to a rapid end, for how could the planet subsist if Printing-house Square were closed ? You are passionately fond of music, and long to listen to a concert or an opera. But unless you can depend upon the services of amateurs, your chances of indulgence are small ; for every orchestra disbanded as soon as the doom of labour was pronounced, and all your professional songsters may plead an eternal cold if they think proper. The peace of a respectable community must be maintained ; and when your pocket is picked, your person assailed, your house invaded, you call for the police ; but now, alas ! it is of no use, for these functionaries are dancing and frolicking in all the joys of emancipation. It makes you ill to think of it, but you must take care to keep well, for there are no more doctors to come at your call, no apothecaries to compound your medicines, no solicitors to draw your will.

And if the more respectable occupations are thus abandoned, what is to become of the meaner ? Who will sweep your chimneys, wash your linen, empty your privies, or clean your cesspools ? Who will make you a coffin, dig you a grave, figure as a mute at your funeral, or lower your body into its resting-place ? If, in short, the world were legislatively released from the obligation to labour on the 1st January, 1900, every good man would pray that the old *régime* might be restored before the 1st January, 1901. Even Charles Lamb, with all his animosity to the "desk's

dead wood," would have revoked his stanzas on Leisure when he saw what mischief must ensue :

"But might I, fed with silent meditation,
 Assoiled live from that fiend—Occupation,
Improbis Labor which my spirits hath broke,
 I'd drink of Time's rich cup, and never surfeit,
 Fling in more days than went to make the gem,
 That crown'd the white top of Methusalem.
 Yea on my weak neck take, and never forget,
 Like Atlas bearing up the dainty sky,
 The heaven-sweet burthen of eternity."

No ; labour is a burden in many respects ; a curse in some, but for creatures like ourselves it is still the "better strife," the "strife that is good for men ;" for it is the promoter of ingenuity, the parent of thought, the great stimulator of industry, the source of innumerable benefits to our race. Like the cloud which looks so gloomy and lowering to the eye, it drops showers of fertility on the needy earth. The very malediction which the Almighty pronounced upon the ground is fragrant with blessings, if we could only interpret it aright.



SUBJECT : *Diversity of Opinion a Necessity of Being.*

"Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind."—Rom. xiv. 5.

SOCIETY owes much to the friction of mind, as it does to the friction of feelings. Imagine a planet so constituted that the intellects of its inhabitants always reasoned after the same fashion, and, therefore, invariably deduced the same conclusions. A perfect Paradise, the reader will exclaim ! No quarrels—no dissensions—no misunderstandings—no wranglings with the lips or the pen ; the tongue itself deprived of all controversial aliment, and compelled to keep the peace—what could be more delightful than such a spot ?

Now, unanimity of sentiment may be very good in a general way, but in some respects it would prove extremely annoying. Let us see how the matter stands under the existing regulations of mind. Jones and Robinson, two gentlemen bound for Australia, meet on board the same vessel, and are thrown into close companionship during their voyage. Both are men of strong logical powers, but Jones is passionately

fond of discussion, and loves a good argument better than an Irishman loves a Donnybrook battle. Before long the two open a conversation : first, the weather ; second, the vessel ; then the weather again ; but soon Jones lays down a principle upon which he desires to have the opinion of his shipmate. Robinson expounds his views at length, and Jones discovers that they correspond in every particular with his own. Perhaps the latter is flattered by the coincidence, but of course he is no wiser than he was before. He starts another topic ; some delicate question, perhaps, respecting the currency, and after discoursing profoundly for a while, would Mr. Robinson please to say what he thinks on the important point ? Mr. Robinson will be very happy, and straightway proceeds to deliver himself of his currency sentiments, which prove to be identical with those of his companion. Jones perhaps professes to be pleased with the circumstance, because he looks upon it as a testimony to his own genius, but secretly he feels somewhat disconcerted. He would have liked a bit of a battle. Had his friend differed from him a little here and there, with what delight he would have fought him—amicably, of course, until one or the other were vanquished. Jones, however, soon takes to the arena again. He raises the capital punishment question, and runs through his whole stock of reasons why scoundrels should be strangled. What conclusion had Robinson formed ? The latter begs to say that Mr. Jones has expressed his own convictions so ably and so accurately, that he has not a single syllable to add. Poor Jones—his face is a spectacle ! He looks like a sorely defrauded man. Unwilling, however, to give up all hope, he launches into some vexed question in theology. *There*, at any rate, he is certain to encounter conflicting views. Will Robinson be good enough to explain his ideas on the subject of pædobaptism, or predestination, or the Little Horn, or the millennial kingdom ? Willingly, says Robinson, and entering at large into the chosen topic, he unfolds his doctrines as elaborately as if he were preaching to a whole nation. Jones's countenance grows blanker as the discourse proceeds, for he discovers that Robinson's arguments tally to a hair with his own. Not a link in his logic is wanting in that of his companion, but both coincide from first to last, as if the two were Siamese twins in soul. Still, Jones does not altogether despair. He dashes into some difficult scientific question : Are there

two electrical fluids, or only one? Is the discharge of a cloud like that of a Leyden phial, or a prime conductor? Is light corpuscular or undulatory? Was coal formed by drifted trees, or by vegetation produced on the spot? Does a glacier move as a viscous body, or drag its slow length along upon the principle of regelation? Alas, just the same result ensues! Robinson is found to entertain precisely the same opinions, based upon the same data, and supported by the same arguments; he appears, in fact, to have a mere duplicate brain. Jones gets wild. He looks as if he couldn't "stand it." He eschews Robinson, and opens intercourse with Jackson. What does the latter think about divers matters—moral, social, political, theological, meteorological? To his great consternation the questioner finds that the ideas of Jackson answer to his own with such exactitude, that they seem to be mere echoes from *his* intellect. What is to be done? Jones will probably go mad. He forswears Jackson, and experiments upon each of his fellow-passengers in succession. But there is a miracle on board, for every one thinks alike, and all their mental operations appear to be precisely the same. Down to the very accidentals of argument there is no more difference in their inferences than if the whole human cargo had only a single intellect in common. Jones possibly loses his senses in earnest.

Let the vessel represent the world at large, and then imagine the horror poor Jones would feel when he found himself embarked in a planet where differences of opinion could not exist except by the wilful perversion of judgment, or the obstinate exclusion of all logical light.

There is nothing extravagant in the supposition that the reasoning processes might have been as peremptory in their character as the processes of arithmetic. A man might have had just the same chance, but no more, of going astray in an argument, that he has in working a sum in multiplication or the rule of three. If two persons came to a different conclusion with regard to the same set of scientific or theological facts, it might have been as possible to point out the mistake as it would be had they disagreed in extracting the square root of the same given quantity. But this would have made the world a very insipid sort of place. Constituted as man is, we are bound to say that it would not have answered. He is far from being an angel. He is an imperfect creature, put to school in a disciplinary planet, and his vocation is

labour and self-development. What is expected of him is progress here and preparation for an Hereafter. Doubtless the dislocation of the mental faculties like the division of tongues at Babel, is a sequel to, or a consequence of, primitive sin. But, looking at circumstances as they exist, it is clear that, if all persons thought alike, society would degenerate into a stagnant expanse where agitation would be welcome, even if it could only be procured at the cost of much disorder and convulsion. It is a pitiable thing to say, but I fear the admission must be made, that if we had but one Church, one faith, one ritual, one doctrine, all the world over, religion would gradually decay, and men—such as they now are—deprived of the stimulus which conflicting creeds engender, would sink, to a great extent, into profound spiritual apathy. How these matters are adjusted in a higher state of being, it is impossible to guess; but here, as already intimated, it often happens that human foibles and even human vices are skilfully turned to account, and compelled to minister to the great ends for which the race was created.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

TRUE GLORY.

"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them."—John xvii. 22.

THIS chapter is the sublimest prayer that ever ascended from this earth to heaven—the prayer of Christ. It reveals at once the purpose of God, the heart of Christ, and the wants of humanity. Every sentence is a text, and the sentence we have selected is not the least significant. It leads us to make three remarks concerning true glory,

I. TRUE GLORY IS THE SAME IN ALL MORAL INTELLIGENCES.

"The glory which thou gavest me," &c. The prayer in the chapter refers to several grand *unities*. It speaks of *one* life; the life of God, Christ, man, is spoken of as *one*. It speaks of *one* truth, "Thy truth." Truth has many sides, but it is one essential whole. What are called truths are but phases of the one truth, of which God is the centre and circumference, the root and the

branch. It speaks of *one* church, "that they all may be one." There is but one Church. The godly in all sects, countries, worlds, are but members of one grand spiritual whole, one family, of which Christ is the head.

"The Church on earth and all the dead

But one communion make."

It speaks of one love. That "the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them and I in them." Benevolence has many modifications—justice, mercy, forbearance, &c. But in essence it is the same in all minds. Love is one as God is one. In the text it speaks of *one* glory. "The glory which thou gavest me," &c. The glory which Christ had was the glory of God, and this glory He imparts to mankind. What is true glory? It is the glory of *moral goodness*. When Moses prayed the Eternal to show him his glory, the reply was, "I will cause all my *goodness* to pass before thee. In the eye of conscience, in the light of the Bible, and in the estimate of the great God and his holy universe, the good *only* are glorious.

II. TRUE GLORY IS COMMUNICABLE FROM ONE BEING TO ANOTHER. The glory which Christ had came from God, and was now being imparted to his disciples. Three

things are necessary to its communication. First: *The manifestation of it*. Were the Eternal to conceal his glory, no creature intelligence could participate in its rays. Goodness, to be communicated, must be revealed. A good being, to make others good, must show his own goodness. Secondly: *The contemplation of it*. What boots it if glory is manifested, if no eye observes it, no mind contemplates it? The man who in noontide splendour shuts his eyes, is as truly in darkness as he who gropes his way in the depths of midnight. Thirdly: *The imitation of it*. There must be an effort on the part of the observer to imbibe, and cherish, and develop the divine spirit of goodness and of glory. Thus true glory is communicated. It comes not to us irrespective of our choice and effort. It requires attention, study, practice.

III. TRUE GLORY COMES TO MAN THROUGH JESUS CHRIST. "I have given them." Christ was the *only perfect revealer* of true glory. "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." "He was the brightness of his Father's glory." No other being ever revealed God to man as Christ did. "No man hath seen God at any time, the

only begotten Son, he hath revealed him." It is by studying Him and imitating Him that men become glorious. "For we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." There is no true glory for man dissociated from Christ.

IV. TRUE GLORY IS CONSISTENT WITH CIRCUMSTANTIAL SUFFERING. These disciples had received their glory from Christ, yet what were their *circumstances* in the world? They were poor, tried, persecuted, regarded as the off-scouring of all things. Ultimately, most of them left the world through the agonies of martyrdom. Yet, in all their struggles and toils, in all their afflictions and dangers, in all the obloquies they received, in all the tortures they met with from enemies, they were glorious. In affluence of heavenly thought, in force of holy will, in peace and energy of conscience, in purity and disinterestedness of love, in an unconquerable power of endurance, in an invincible heroism, in free fellowship with God, in high hopes of immortality in a fame that corruscates, and in an influence that widens and deepens through the ages, they were glorious.

Glorious, too, were they in their achievements. "Through faith they subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, and escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to fight the armies of the aliens." To their bloodless victories we owe our liberty, our Bible, our schools, our asylums, our Christendom.

THE GOSPEL: ITS DESCRIPTION, PREACHERS, AND HEARERS.

"Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect."—1 Cor. ii. 6.

THE spirit of schism was at this time distracting the Corinthian Church with its acrimonious disputations. The apostle, though aware of their debates, enters not their arena of disputation, but continues to preach "Christ, and Him crucified." No doubt this conduct of his would lead many of his enemies to say the religion of Paul is a superstition that will not bear debate, for he repudiates wisdom and philosophy. To this state of mind the apostle seems to reply in the text, "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them, &c." As if he had said, "though what we preach

is not what we have learnt in your schools of philosophy, and though we do not embellish our speech with the figures of Grecian rhetoric ; we, nevertheless, 'speak wisdom.' In the text we have three things concerning the Gospel :—

I. A DESCRIPTION OF ITS NATURE. Paul calls it *wisdom*. In the 24th verse of the preceding chapter he calls it the "wisdom of God." In another place he calls it the "manifold wisdom of God." The wisdom of a system may be determined by two things. First : *By the character of the end it contemplates*. A system which aims at an insignificant or unworthy end would scarcely be considered wise. What is the end the Gospel aimed at ? It may be expressed in one sentence. *The restoration in human souls of supreme sympathy with God*. This supreme sympathy is the life and happiness of souls. This man lost in the fall. The absence of this love is the cause of all the crimes, evils, and sorrows that curse the world ; the restoration of this is the soul's salvation. When the value and the influence of one soul are considered, is not the restoration of it even in *one* case, a grand end ? But the Gospel aims at the restoration of it in *all* souls. The wisdom

of a system may be determined, Secondly : *By the fitness of the means it employs*. Though a system contemplate a grand end, yet if the means it employs are unadapted, it could scarcely be called wise. What are the means, then, Christianity employs to generate this love for God in unloving souls ? Ask, what the souls destitute of this love *must* have in order to get it, and our answer will be three things. First : A *personal* manifestation of God. The human heart is so constituted that it can only set its supreme affection upon a *person* ; and nature, grand though it is, does not impress us with the personality of God. It is too vast and boundless to bring the Eternal as a person under our notice. Secondly : A *human* manifestation of God. We scarcely think that God in the form of an angel, or of any creature, however exalted, not belonging to our own race, would awaken this affection. God in any form but man's own form, would rather terrify and repel men than inspire them with confidence and hope. Thirdly : A *loving* manifestation of God. A manifestation of coldness, anger, vengeance, would never awaken love. Love alone begets love. These things we think essential in

the nature of the case, and just these three things the Gospel does. In Christ it gives us a *personal, human, loving* manifestation of God. It is, therefore, emphatically, the "wisdom of God." It is divine philosophy. "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." Another thing which we have in the text concerning the Gospel, is—

II. A RULE FOR ITS PREACHERS. "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect." The word "perfect" has, some think, an allusion to the heathen mysteries. These mysteries were religious observances of a secret kind, open only to the initiated. Those who attached this meaning to the word, would regard Paul as saying, "Our doctrine, which appears foolishness to the outside world, and which does not reveal its full excellence even to those who are only beginners in the faith, has depths in it which are disclosed to more advanced believers, just as in the mysteries with which you yourselves are familiar, there are things which are kept hidden from the multitude, and disclosed only to those who have gone through the rites of initiation." The apostle clearly means by the word "perfect," those in the Christian community who

were more advanced in the knowledge of Christ, who stood most in contrast with those who are but "babes in Christ." One of three ideas may be attached to the language of the apostle. *Either that he had an exoteric and esoteric doctrine for men; or that the most advanced Christian alone could discern the wisdom of his doctrine; or that he adapted his teaching to the capacity of his hearers.* Which of these ideas are we to accept? Not the first, for Paul had not two messages, one for those who were without the Church, and one for those within—one for those who had high capacity, and one for those who had weak. His message to all was one—God's love to the world through Christ. Not the second, for the man who was the least advanced in the Christian life must have some appreciation of the Gospel. It was the last, namely, that he accommodated his teaching to the capacity of his hearers. In another place he tells the Christians at Corinth that he had hitherto "fed them with milk, and not with meat, because they were not able to bear it." His conduct I take as a *rule* for all true preachers. The great saving facts of the Gospel are few and simple. They are, according

to Paul, that Christ died, was buried, and rose again. These facts are the fundamentals of the Christian system, and they must be proclaimed. But the doctrines connected with these facts and their relation to man, God, the universe, are phases of truth which can only be appreciated by those who have attained to certain stages in Christian knowledge and experience. The Great Teacher has said, "I have many things to say unto you, and ye cannot bear them now." Another thing which we have in the text concerning the Gospel is

III. AN OBLIGATION UPON ITS HEARERS. If the higher aspects of Gospel religion can only be appreciated by those who are "perfect," those who have attained to a high stage of Christian knowledge, it is manifestly their duty to endeavour to advance beyond the "first principles of the oracles of God." This duty—First: *Hearers owe to themselves*. The more knowledge man has of the wisdom of the Gospel, the more power he has within him to purify his affections, exalt his character, and bless his being. The ignorant Christian is feeble, fickle, uninfluential. This duty—Secondly: *Hearers owe to their minister*. The man who has to minister to hearers who make no progress

in Divine truth is limited in his thoughts to the mere rudimentals of the Gospel. His motives for pulpit study weaken, and he becomes the common-place utterer of platitudes. This duty—Thirdly: *Hearers owe to the system of Christ*. The glorious system of Christ, which is "the wisdom of God," will only grow in power, influence, and extent in the world as men's knowledge of it increases.

Brothers, follow on, then, to know the Lord, grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

SOUL ORPHANHOOD.

"I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you."—John xiv. 18.

THE word "comfortless" should have been orphans. *Orphanos* is the original word, and it is a pity that our translators should have given "comfortless" rather than "orphans." Wiclif translates this verse, "I schal not leave you fadirles"; and the Rheims version, "I will not leave you orphans." The authorized version, too, has "orphans" in the margin. The text leads us to offer some remarks on soul orphanhood.

I. SOUL ORPHANHOOD CONSISTS IN MORAL SEPARATION

FROM God. This seems to be implied. We say moral separation, not *local*, for God is everywhere, and no spirit can flee from his presence. Not *physical*, for as an existant it has its life and force in God. But *morally* it may be distant from Him, and in the case of the unregenerate is ever distant from Him. It is "alienated" from Him in sympathy, purpose, and pursuit. It is without God. God is not in all its thoughts. The ungodly world is a world of orphans. They are without a father's fellowship and guidance.

II. SOUL ORPHANHOOD IS AN EVIL OF FEARFUL MAGNITUDE. The language of Christ implies that his disciples would feel this orphanism to be the greatest of evils; and a terrible evil in truth it is.

First: *Orphanism so far as human parents are concerned is a calamity, but this is a crime.* A child bereft of its parents, left alone, disconsolate and desolate in this cold world, is truly an object of commiseration, but not of *blame*. The great Disposer of life deprived him of his earthly guardians. But in the orphanage of soul there is *guilt*. The soul has broken away from its Father, the Father has not gone from it.

Secondly: *Orphanism, as far as human parents is concerned, may have its loss supplied by others.* Society in many cases supplies the poor orphan with friends, and does more for his happiness than his parents could. Thank God, society in this age has loving hearts, and wholesome food, and comfortable clothing and good homes for orphans. But nothing on earth can relieve soul orphanhood; nothing in the universe; nothing can take the place of God in relation to the soul. Oh! there is no evil comparable to this. The starving child at night in a wilderness, teeming with beasts of prey, crying for food, protection, and guidance, is not in a condition half so terrible as an orphan soul—a soul without God; such a soul is benighted, perishing, lost.

III. SOUL ORPHANHOOD IS REMOVED BY THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST. "I will not leave you orphans, I will come unto you." Here Christ speaks of Himself not merely as the substitute of the Father, but as the Father Himself. As if he had said, "My coming to you will be as the coming of the Father to you, for I and my Father are one." "Show us the Father and it sufficeth," said Philip. Christ answered:

"Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father also." Christ brings the soul into a loving, joyous, blessed fellowship with God. The deep cry of humanity is the cry of the orphan for the Father. The response to that cry is the advent of Christ, "I will not leave you orphans, I will come unto you."

PASTOR AND CHURCH.

"Arise: for this matter belongeth unto thee: we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it.—(Ezra x. 4.)

THREE general remarks—

I. THAT THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER IS THE CHIEF INSTRUMENT IN THE MORAL RENOVATION OF SOCIETY. Four things show this. First: *He is originally endowed with powers, which specially qualify him for his work.* Secondly: *He has been*

educated for his high vocation. Thirdly: *He has more time than others for such an end.* Fourthly: *It is to the Christian minister the world looks for moral and spiritual help.*

II. THAT THE TRUE CHURCH GLADLY CO-OPERATES WITH THE MINISTER IN HIS NOBLE AIM. The Church *can* co-operate with him. First: *By showing him personal sympathy.* Secondly: *By working out his plans.* Thirdly: *By praying for him.*

III. THAT THE CO-OPERATION OF THE CHURCH IS A SOURCE OF JOY AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE MINISTER. First: *Co-operation is indicative of the spiritual health of the Church.* Secondly: *It shows that the Church appreciates the minister's exertions.* Thirdly: *Co-operation is a necessary condition of success.*

D. LEWIS.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CXXIV.)

LABOUR, TALK, WEALTH.

"In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury. The crown of the wise is their riches; but the foolishness of fools is folly."—Prov. xiv. 23, 24.

HERE we have—

I. PROFITABLE LABOUR. "In all labour there is profit." The word "all" here of course must be taken with limitation. Ill-directed labour is not profitable. First: Labour is profitable to *our physical health*; exercise, one of the fundamental conditions of corporeal health and strength. Secondly: Labour is profitable to *our character*. It conduces to force of thought, energy of will, power of endurance, capacity of application. Thirdly: Labour is profitable to *our social comforts*. By labour, honest, well-directed labour, man gets not only the necessities, but the comforts, the luxuries, the elegances, and the elevated positions of life. In all labour, then—well directed labour—there is profit. Every honest effort has its reward. There is no true labour that is vain.

II. IMPOVERISHING TALK. "The talk of the lips tendeth only to penury." All talk does not tend to penury. There is a talk that is profitable. The talk of the preacher, the lecturer, the statesman, the barrister, more often tend to affluence than to penury. The talk here is the talk of useless gossip. The desire for talk in some people is a ruling passion. Their tongues are in perpetual motion; they are ever in search of listeners. Their highest pleasure is in prosy,

frothy, useless tattle. As a rule, in proportion to the strength of this desire to talk, is the disinclination to work, and hence penury comes. Sir Walter Raleigh says, "He that is lavish in words, is a niggard indeed. The shuttle, the needle, the spade, the brush, the chisel, all are still but the tongue."

III. DIGNIFYING WEALTH. "The crown of the wise is their riches." The idea is, that a wise man would so use his wealth that it will become a crown to him. By using it to promote his own mental and spiritual cultivation, and to ameliorate the woes and to augment the happiness of the world, his wealth gives him a diadem more lustrous far than all the diamond crowns of kings. *But the foolishness of fools is folly.* This looked at antithetically means that the wealth of a fool adds no dignity to his character.

(No. CXXV.)

THE TRUE WITNESS.

"A true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful witness speaketh lies."—Prov. xiv. 25.

WE make three remarks on this sentence:—

I. IN JUDICIARY MATTERS THE THING ASSERTED IS NOT ALWAYS TRUE. A true witness in a court of justice, where the facts are *criminatory*, must go to the condemnation and ruin of the criminal. The true witness may be such a merciful man as to desire intensely to save the prisoner, but still because he is true, he must state the facts, even though the facts lead to ruin. It is only

when the facts are *vindicatory*, the true witness can deliver.

II. IN THE DISPOSITION OF THE MIND THE THING ASSERTED IS GENERALLY TRUE. "It is probable," says an able expositor, that the intended antithesis relates, not so much to the *actual fact* of truth saving and falsehood condemning, as to the *dispositions and intentions* of the faithful witness on the one hand, and the lying witness on the other. The faithful witness delights in giving testimony that will save life, that will be salutary, beneficial to his fellow-creatures. The lying witness will, in general, be found actuated by a malevolent and wicked purpose, having pleasure in giving testimony that will go to condemn the object of his malice. The sentiment will thus be, *that truth is most generally found in union with kindness of heart, and falsehood with malevolence*. And this is natural; the former being both good, the latter both evil; falsehood more naturally akin to malice, and truth to love."

III. IN THE EVANGELICAL MINISTRY THE THING ASSERTED IS ALWAYS TRUE. A true witness to Gospel facts delivereth souls. The true work of a Gospel minister is that of a witness. "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me," &c. (Acts i. 8.) A true witness in the evangelical sense must be one, First: *Who is thoroughly conversant with the facts*. Secondly: *Who honestly propounds the facts*. Thirdly: *Who lives in accordance with the facts*. Such a witness delivereth souls. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Tim. iv. 16.)

(No. CXXVI.)

GODLINESS, SAFETY, AND LIFE.

"In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence; and his children shall have a place of refuge. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."—Prov. xiv. 26, 27.

WE learn from these words—

I. THAT GODLINESS IS SAFETY.

"The fear of the Lord is strong confidence." By the fear of the Lord is meant, of course, no slavish fear, associated with terror, suspicion, and apprehension, but filial fear, implying love and confidence. It is a fear that is strong confidence. Perfect love casteth out all that is servile and cowardly in fear. The godly are "his children"—the children of God, and they have "a place of refuge." The godly are *safe*. God is their refuge and strength. They will not fear though the earth be removed. We make three remarks about this refuge. First: *It is a provision against immense dangers*. The sinner is exposed to evils and enemies which God alone can truly estimate. The principalities and powers of darkness are against him. Secondly: *It admits of the greatest freedom of action*. A prison is a refuge as well as a fortress. The inmate is well guarded by massive bars and granite walls from all without, but he has no liberty. But all in this refuge have ample scope for action. The sphere is as infinite as God. Thirdly: *It is accessible at all times and for all persons*. Its gates are open day and night. It extends to men on every zone of the globe. Yet men will not enter. They stand shivering without while the storm is gathering. David was in this refuge, and he said, "God is my refuge and my strength," &c. Paul was in this refuge, and he said, "I am persuaded that neither death nor life," &c.

II. THAT GODLINESS IS LIFE. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death. What is said here of the fear of the Lord is said in Prov. xiii. 14, of the "law of the wise." And what is the law of the wise but the fear of the Lord—godliness. Godliness is a fountain of happiness. *Salubrious, abundant, perennial.**

No. CXXVII.

THE POPULATION OF AN EMPIRE AND THE HONOUR OF ITS RULER.

"In the multitude of people is the king's honour; but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince."
—Prov. xiv. 28.

I. AN INCREASING POPULATION REFLECTS HONOUR ON THE GOVERNMENT. Where the population of a country thrives, three good things are implied. First: *Peace*. Murders, insurrections, wars, and violence in all its forms, go to thin the population. Hence, where a population multiplies rapidly, the government is more or less a reign of peace. Another good thing implied when the population increases is,—Secondly: *Sufficiency*. Scarcity of provisions, destitution, tend to starvation, and often drive the people to emigrate to distant shores. A country where there is sufficiency of food for the people reflects honour on the government. It shows scope for enterprise, free labour, and free trade. Another good implied when the population increases, is,—Thirdly: *Salutariness*. Pestilence thins a population. Pestilences spring from a neglect of sanitary laws. Where a population grows, therefore, it shows that sanitary ordinances are more or less attended to. Thus the increase of a population

in any country reflects honour on the ruler. "In the multitude of the people is the king's honour."

II. AN INCREASING POPULATION SUSTAINS THE HONOUR OF A GOVERNMENT. First: *The more people the more power of defence*. The king whose subjects are few and decreasing has but little power of defence. He is exposed to invasions. Small states are powerless before mighty empires. Secondly: *The more people the more power of revenue*. Money, which is the sinew of war, is also the architect of noble institutions and the caterer to royal needs, and tastes, and pageantries. Thus it is true, that "in the multitude of people is the king's honour; but in the want of people is the destruction of the prince."

(No. CXXVIII.)

TEMPER.

"He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding; but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly."—Prov. xiv. 29.

EVERY man has what is called *Temper*—a kind of inner atmosphere, in which he lives, breathes, and works. This atmosphere has great varieties of temperature, from zero to blood heat, and great changes of weather too, severe and stormy, cloudy and sunny. This temper, however, unlike the outward atmosphere, is controllable by man. He can regulate his temperatures and weathers. The passage leads us to look at temper in two aspects—

I. AS CONTROLLED. "*He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding.*" First: *It requires the efforts of a great understanding rightly to control temper*. There are some whose tempers are naturally choleric and stormy. They are so combustible that the tiniest spark of offence will set

* See HOMILIST, vol ix., third series, p. 293.

them in flames. Can such tempers be controlled? Some are constantly pleading their natural tempers as a palliation of their imperfections and their crimes. It is vain to do this. Our Creator has given us an understanding to control our passions. It seems to me that, as a rule, the force of intellect in a man is always equal to his impulses. Where there are mighty impulses, there is a mighty understanding equal to their impulses. A sublimer sight one can scarcely have, than that of a man with powerful passions majestically calm in irritating circumstances. Such a man shows a great understanding, an understanding that bids the heaving billows within be calm, and they are at peace. Secondly: *It repays the efforts of a great understanding rightly to control temper.* The highest victories are the victories over temper. To raise our nature above those vexatious feelings which the annoyances and contrarities of life are calculated to excite, is the most remunerative of labours. It gives a royalty to a man's life, before which meaner spirits bow. Moses at the Red Sea, is an example of disciplined temper. Christ also the sublime example. (1 Peter ii. 21—23.) We are exhorted to this. (Eph. iv. 26.) The passage leads us to look at temper—

II. AS UNCONTROLLED. "He that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly." He exalts folly by giving passion the throne, and the sceptre, and placing the soul under her capricious and violent dominion. What crimes are committed, what woes created every day, by giving the reins to passion. Cowper has very graphically described an ungoverned, fretful temper,—

"Some fretful tempers wince at every touch,
You always do too little or too much ;

You speak with life, in hopes to entertain;
Your elevated voice goes through the brain;
You fall at once into a lower key,—
That's worse!—the drone-pipe of an humble bee;
The southern sash admits too strong a light,—
You rise and drop the curtain—now 'tis night;
He shakes with cold—you stir the fire, and strive
To make a blaze; that's roasting him alive.
Serve him with venison, and he chooses fish;
With sole—that's just the sort he would not wish.
He takes what he at first professed to loathe,
And in due time feeds heartily on both;
Yet still o'erclouded with a constant frown,
He does not swallow, but he gulps it down.
Your hope to please him vain on every plan,
Himself should work that wonder if he can!
Alas! his efforts double his distress;
He likes you little, and his own still less.
Thus always teasing others, always teased,
His only pleasure is—to be displeased."

(No. CXXIX.)

GODLINESS AND HUMANITY.*

"He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor."—Prov. xiv. 31.

GODLINESS and humanity, in other words piety and philanthropy, are essentially one. Wherever there is piety or godliness, there is philanthropy. Philanthropy is the offspring, and the ritualism, of all true religion. "Pure and undefiled religion before God," &c.

The text teaches—

I. THAT INHUMANITY IS UN-GODLINESS. "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker." There is a great deal of inhumanity in the world, the poor have to

* The 30th verse is discussed elsewhere in the HOMILIST.

endure a great deal of "oppression." Superior force is exerted to exact their labours for the most inadequate remuneration, and thus to "grind their faces." All this oppression of the poor is a reproach of God; he who does it "reproacheth his Maker." He reproaches his Maker, First: *By disregarding that identity of nature with which our Maker has endowed all classes.* There is no distinction of nature in rich and poor; God hath made of one flesh and blood all nations. The same blood flows through all, the same attributes, belong to all; the same relations, are sustained by all, the same destiny awaits all. Secondly: *By disregarding those laws which our Maker has enjoined concerning the poor.* Everywhere we are exhorted to remember the poor, to compassionate the poor, to help the poor. "And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen into decay with thee, then shalt thou relieve him; yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner, that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase, but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee." (Lev. xxv. 35, 36.) "The poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land." (Deut. xv. 11.) Inhumanity, then, is ungodliness. "He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness until now."

II. TRUE HUMANITY IS GODLINESS. "He that honoureth

him, hath mercy on the poor." He that honoureth God, by loving Him supremely, and serving Him, will have mercy on the poor. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us. The way to glorify God, to show our love for Him, is to serve our race. There is, it is true, a fickle, sentimental, natural mercifulness for the poor, which has no connection with godliness, but this is not true humanity. True humanity is that which sympathizes with man, as the offspring of God, the victim of moral evil, the child of immortality, and which consecrates itself in the Spirit of Christ to ameliorate his woes and redeem his soul, and this is godliness in its practical development. "I not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh." (Isa. lviii. 6, 7.)

A poet has thus described the spirit of true humanity:—

"A sense of an earnest will
To help the lowly living,
And a terrible heart-thrill,
If you had no power of giving;
An arm of aid to the weak,
A friendly hand to the friendless,
Kind words so short to speak,
But whose echo is endless:
The world is wide, these things are small,
They may be nothing, but they are all."

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

THE ODES OF HORACE. Books I. and II. By JAMES WALKER SMITH, LL.D. London: Effingham Wilson.

HORACE has not hitherto been well treated by the translators. Some of them in aiming at poetry have departed from the precise meaning of the original text; others, in attempting to keep closely to it have produced compositions which have been inartistic and crude. Dr. Smith has avoided both these errors, and his work is, therefore, a great success. His translation indicates that he has the clearest insight into the poet's meaning, and a command of poetic language which enables him to convey that meaning with an accuracy and a beauty of cadence which are of the highest order. The book is arranged so that the Latin and English appear in parallel pages. The translator occupies only the same number of lines as the poet; and the verses of the one correspond exactly in length to the verses of the other. Yet there is no jingling; and there is everywhere a complete absence of that false quantity, stiffness of expression, and strained rhythm, which might have been expected, and in some cases have been pardoned, under the circumstances. Whoever has a taste for the classics will be greatly pleased with this elegant book. It bears the closest inspection, and still compels a respectful but emphatic expression of hearty commendation. Dr. Smith's great abilities and high attainments are well known. His works on various subjects have from time to time been noticed in these pages. Excellent as is his reputation, we believe his present work will tend to enhance it still more; whilst the fact that he has been able to consecrate to the muses the necessarily slender leisure permitted by engrossing professional engagements, is a fact which speaks strongly for the purity of his literary taste, his untiring industry, and the versatility of his genius. We subjoin the Doctor's rendering of Horace's Thirty-fourth Ode against the Epicurean philosophy, not because it is the best specimen, but because it is more suitable for our pages than some which otherwise we should quote.

"'Twas scant and rare the worship that I gave
When following wisdom which did wisdom lack;
Now must my bark retrace the travelled wave,
And sail upon another tack.

"The reason's this :—That Jove, whose wont has been
To lighten only in the cloudy heaven,
Of late, in thunder through the vault serene,
His steeds and rapid car has driven.

"Trembled the wandering streams and sluggish ground,
And trembled Styx and Tœnarus' bristling seat—
Hell's hated gate—and shook the furthest bound
Where Atlas and the ocean meet.

"The god makes low exchange its place with high ;
The lofty lessens, and brings th' obscure to place ;
And thievish Fortune, with a shrieking cry,
Will some discrown and others grace."

THE VOICE OF THE PRAYER-BOOK. Lectures and Annotations on the Liturgy, Expository and Apologetic. By the Rev. NELSON LORRAINE. London : Longmans, Green, and Co., Paternoster Row.

"THIS little volume," says the author, "is designed to furnish the younger members of the English Church, and those who have neither the opportunity nor the leisure to read larger and more recondite works, with a key to the history and meaning of our unrivalled Book of Common Prayer." He also states: "The text of my volume is the substance of a series of lectures recently delivered in my own church. I have, however, added appendices and copious notes, biographical and expository, and in these I have referred the reader to ample sources of further information *ad rem*. It has been my intention thus to provide a Church hand-book suitable for popular use, and at the same time a guide-book for those who may desire to examine with greater care the history and meaning of the Liturgy." His object, he says, "has been honestly to ascertain the voice of the Prayer-Book. The question is, what are its teachings? not what are my opinions? I have, therefore, endeavoured to interpret the Liturgy from itself; whilst, with regard to those subjects that are of difficult or disputed interpretation, I have referred at length to the distinguished divines who framed the Prayer-Book, and to those of their coadjutors, who were its most learned and luminous expositors and apologists. Surely they must have known the meaning and design of the book they prepared; and fortunately they have left ample materials from which to interpret their judgments." This volume is crowded with most interesting and important information upon the subject, well arranged, and set forth. Although the able author has a high, and, we think, an exaggerated estimate of the Liturgy, which he calls "our unrivalled Book of Common Prayer," he is no bigot. The subjects of the volume are, "The Ancient Use and General Advantages of fixed Forms of Prayer in Public Worship; the Historical Review of the Book of Common Prayer; Rationale of Morning and Evening prayer; a Rationale of the Fasts and Festivals

the power of the Keys; or the Doctrine of Absolution as taught in the Church of England; the Sacrament of the Holy Communion; the Sacrament of Baptism; the Rite of Confirmation; the Order for the Burial of the Dead." These subjects are treated not only with great literary ability, but in a spirit truth-loving, candid, and catholic. We sincerely believe that the author himself could, in six months, produce a Liturgy in every way superior to what he calls the "unrivalled Book of Common Prayer."

ESSAYS AND DISCOURSES ON POPULAR AND STANDARD THEMES. By T. W. TOZER. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

ADDISON somewhere in the *Spectator* has spoken concerning two kinds of preachers, the amiable and the unamiable. The latter represent religion under an aspect so little amiable, that they resemble the spies sent by Moses to explore the Promised Land, and who by their recitals discourage the people from entering. The former, who show the cheerfulness of heart, the happy temper which spring naturally from the bliss of believing, resemble the spies who brought back the clusters of grapes, and the delicious fruits, the mere sight of which invited their fellow-countrymen to penetrate the fruitful country which had produced them. It is difficult to know from these sermons to which of these two Mr. Tozer belongs. The subjects he has selected for the most part present him more in the aspect of John the Baptist than of John the beloved disciple. He is often stern, severe, and serious; not more so, however, than the subjects in discussion appear to warrant. Another class of subjects would bring out the more genial and sunny aspects of his nature. We pronounce the sermons in this volume as decidedly above the average. He grasps his subject with the hand of a man, analyses it with a sage-like faculty, and disposes of the elements with the honesty of a prophet. In some of the sermons there are passages indicating far-reaching thought, and fine strokes of literary power.

TWELVE YEARS IN CANTERBURY, NEW ZEALAND, with Visits to the other Provinces, and Reminiscences of the Route Home through Australia, &c. By Mrs. CHARLES THOMSON. London: Sampson Low, Son, and Marston, Milston House, Ludgate Hill.

THE lady from whose journal this book is the outcome resided twelve years in the Canterbury settlement, where she founded for herself a happy and a prosperous home, and subsequently visited the other provinces of New Zealand, and the great towns of Australia. Having been in the habit of noting down in her journal all that struck her as being curious in her travels, and finding, on her return to England, how imperfect was the knowledge possessed by the general public of the

bright and sunny land so far away, she was induced to publish these extracts from her notes. The work abounds with anecdotes, for the most part well told, all throwing light upon the distant scenes and peoples visited, some of an amusing and some of a saddening character. It would be well for all persons intending to visit those regions to procure this work. It has all the interest of a novel, without its baneful influence.

THE CHRISTIAN YEAR-BOOK. London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder, 27, Paternoster Row.

THIS volume is a first attempt to present, in an extended form, the statistics of all the principal societies of every denomination throughout the world, that are directly engaged in the work of evangelization." It supplies a want, and must therefore have a large and constant demand.

LATER LYRICS OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. London: Hamilton, Adams, and Co.

THIS is a companion volume to "Christian Lyrics," by the same compiler. It contains compositions exquisite for their poetry, sentiment, and spirit. Many of them are gathered from sources not readily accessible to the general reader. The book is beautifully "got up;" paper, binding, type, all excellent.

COUNSEL AND CHEER. By Rev. U. S. BLACKIE, D.D., F.R.S.E. Alexander Strahan, 56, Ludgate Hill, London.

THIS is another capital little book from the pen of the author of "Better Days for Working People," and "Heads and Hands for Labour." It is an admirable little work, which we heartily commend, especially to the young.

THE PRIVATE LETTERS OF ST. PAUL AND ST. JOHN. By Rev. SAMUEL Cox. London: Arthur Miall, 18, Bouverie Street, E.C.

THREE of the letters of the New Testament were written to private individuals, Philemon, Kyria, and Gaius. This volume is an exposition of these interesting letters, and the exposition is valuable.

SIX SHORT SERMONS ON SIN. By Rev. ORVY SHIPLEY, B.A. London, Oxford, and Cambridge: Rivingtons.

HERE are six sermons, which, amongst some things objectionable, contain much important truth, presented in an earnest and devout spirit.



A HOMILY

GIT

Enoch, one of the World's Great Teachers.

"And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah, three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters. And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years. And Enoch walked with God, and he was not; for God took him."—Gen. v. 22—24.

"By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God."—Hebrews xi. 5.

"And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."—Jude 14, 15.

THERE are three very strange things that strike us in connection with the history of Enoch. *It is strange that so little is said about him.* The verses we have read comprehend all our reliable knowledge of him. It is true that there is a book called by his name—a book which, although perhaps as ancient as the Epistles, is evidently apocryphal, and therefore not to be trusted. Reference is also made to him in Ecclesiasticus, a book which, although bound up in some of our Bibles, has no right to a place in canonical writings. The words of this book are, "Enoch pleased the Lord, and was translated, being

an example of repentance to all generations." One might have expected that a man who lived so many years as he did, lived a life so divine and useful, would have had an ampler history in the Book of God. We scarcely wonder that all that is said of all the men who lived before the deluge is contained in a few verses in one chapter of Genesis. Each of these millions had, of course, a history of his own. But there is no record; all are gone down the flood of time, and the pall of oblivion is over them. They were men whose lives deserved no record; they were "sinners exceedingly before the Lord," and as soon as their names passed from the memory of the world, the better for the race. But Enoch was a man whose life was at once the expression and organ of the holy and divine. What he did and said was godlike and exemplary, and yet a few broken sentences constitute the whole of his history. Another thing that strikes us as *strange* in this man's history is *the comparative shortness of his stay upon earth*. It is true that he was here three hundred and sixty-five years, a period which, although comprehending a space equal to ten of our generations, was not so much as half of the age of many of his contemporaries. He left the world in the zenith of his manhood. One might have thought that if his contemporaries, who had sunk into depths of wickedness, lived to nine hundred years, that he who was serving his generation by the will of God, would have continued as long, if not longer. Nothing in the procedure of Heaven is more inscrutable to us than the removal of the best men from society in the fulness of their energy and the midst of their usefulness. Another thing that strikes us as *strange* in this man's history is *the manifest singularity of the life he lived*. It would seem that his contemporaries, with the exception of Noah, had descended to the lowest stage of moral corruption. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." The imagination of *every* man was evil; the imagination of every man's *thought* was evil; the imagination of every

man's thought was evil *continually*. Such were his contemporaries. But he "walked with God." He held principles practically repudiated by all ; pursued a course in direct opposition to the whole current of social sentiment, feeling, and practice. It is common for men to plead the wickedness of those with whom their lot is cast as an excuse for their own moral irregularities of life and religious indecision. Such excuses are worse than vain ; they tend to degrade their own nature and to insult their Creator. The life of godliness is practicable in all circles. He who requires us to live a holy life knows that he has furnished us with sufficiency of power, and always affords strength equal to the day.

We shall now look upon Enoch as one of the *world's great teachers*. He taught the world by his life, his translation, and his preaching—

I. HE TAUGHT THE WORLD BY HIS LIFE. Two things are said concerning his life.

First: "*He walked with God.*" The expression "walked with God" implies an *abiding consciousness of the Divine presence*. He "saw him who is invisible." He felt Him about his path, and about his bed, and encompassed all his ways. The Divine presence was not with him a mere dogma ; it was a living conscious fact. He felt God nearer to him than nature, nearer than any other being, the constant companion of his spirit. The language implies *cordial fellowship*. To walk with another implies a mutual sympathy and agreement of soul. By the atoning influences of divine love, Enoch's affections and purposes were brought into unison with the Spirit and the will of God. What a companion he had ! One all-wise, to interpret the mysteries around him, and solve the questions of his own heart ; all-good, supplying his wants, filling him "with joy unspeakable and full of glory." The language implies *spiritual progress*. He walks,—every step bearing him onward into higher truths and richer experiences. A more truthful and elevating description of godliness know I not than this. What is true

religion? It is not a mere belief in dogmas, observance of ceremonies, and membership with churches. It is the spirit-walking with God, holding fellowship with Him who is the Creator of the universe and the Fountain of love.

Secondly: *It is said "He had this testimony, that he pleased God."* How this testimony came to him we are not told. It is not necessary to suppose that it came in any miraculous way, that he heard God's approving voice sounding in the atmosphere, or that an accredited messenger came from heaven to tell him that the Almighty was pleased with his conduct. He had, as we all have, a conscience, and that conscience God's own minister gave the testimony. How blessed such consciousness! He who feels that God is pleased with him, may well be magnanimous in trial, brave in danger, calm and sunny through all the storms of life, and exultant in the prospect of dissolution:—

"There are in this loud, stunning tide
Of human care and crime,
With whom the melodies abide,
Of th' everlasting clime;
Who carry music in their heart
Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
And ply their daily task with busier feet,
Because their hearts some holy strain repeat."

KEBLE.

Such a life as his was indeed a *teaching* life. As the load-star seems to beam more brilliantly in the firmament the darker grows the clouds that float about it, so Enoch's life must have been a luminous power in his age of black depravity. There is no teaching like *life* teaching. All mere verbal and professional teaching is as the tinkling slymbal to this true trump of God. It is the most *intelligible* teaching. The language of the lip is different in different countries. It requires in some cases years of study to understand it. The language of the life men interpret by the instinct of their nature. The eye, the tone, the smile, the gait; the spirit of the man leaps out to light in these. It is the most *un-debateable* teaching. Verbal teaching is frequently so hazy

as to provoke discussion. Words are addressed to the understanding and the understanding will criticise. But what life teaches is unmistakeable. A noble deed strikes right to the hearts of men. A real true life is a divine poem which sets men to music rather than discussion. 'Men reason against your Paleys, but they cannot reason against those whose lives commend themselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. It is the most *constant* teaching. Letter and logic teaching is only occasional. Sometimes they are expressions of the teacher's life, and sometimes they are not. But life teaching is constant. Its light streams through all the acts and events of everyday life. It is not the brooklet that rattles after the shower and is silent in the drought, but it is the perennial river rolling in all seasons, skirting its pathway with life and beauty, and reflecting on its bosom the heavens of God. Oh, for this life-teaching of religion! The example of a man like Enoch is like the mystic Pillar of the Hebrews, whose movements indicate the will of heaven and guide men to a better land.

II. HE TAUGHT THE WORLD BY HIS TRANSLATION. "He was not; for God took him." He was not—*i.e.*, He "was not found"; as Paul has it, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him." The expression, "was not found," suggests that he was missed and sought for. Such a man would be missed. No doubt his age knew him well. He was a preacher of righteousness, he warned his generation of a judgment to come. He was amongst them like some strange brilliant star in their heavens. With his departure there was a palpable blank, sad darkness. They sought for him—sought for him in the house, in the city, in the fields, in the lanes, in his favourite haunts, "he was not found." He was "translated." How he was taken to heaven we know not. But his departure was one of God's grandest homilies to the world. It teaches men such lessons as these—

First: *That death is not a necessity of human nature.* He

did not see death. There are those who say that men are made to die; that, like all organized bodies, their dissolution is inevitable, that death with them, as with all animal existence, is a law of nature. Hence they say that the doctrine that men die because of sin, is a mere theological fiction. It is also said that God intended men to die, otherwise He would not have allowed them to multiply so rapidly, without giving them a world immeasurably larger than this. This earth can only contain a limited number, so that death must have been divinely determined in man's creation, and, therefore, it came not through transgression. The translation of Enoch is an answer to all this. It shows that if death is the law of man's nature, God is stronger than law and can annul it at his pleasure. It shows, too, that if the earth can only support a limited number of men, God could have taken off generations of men as He did Enoch by translation instead of death. He who took one man from this earth without seeing death, could have taken a thousand generations in the same way. Had not sin entered into the world, this might be the way in which the successive generations of mankind would have been removed from their earthly scene of existence. It teaches men—

Secondly : *That there is a sphere of human existence beyond this.* Perhaps the men in these antediluvian times had lost all ideas of a future state of being—had no notion whatever of the doctrine of the body's resurrection. They lived in the present; they were immersed in materialism. The earth to them was their birth-place, their paradise, and their grave. To them there was nothing beyond, and everlasting. The translation of Enoch would be a most palpable and powerful revelation of another sphere for man, a sphere for his body as well as his soul. Whither Enoch went we know not. He went somewhere into the mansions of our Father's house—somewhere where the good of all lands and ages go. It teaches men—

Thirdly : *That there is a God in the universe who approves of goodness.* It is likely that the men of Enoch's age, if they believed in a God at all, would practically regard the

Creator as in "the height of heaven, beyond the stars," unable to see "through the dark clouds." They had no practical faith in the doctrine that He personally superintended the affairs of men, marking even the conduct of individuals, abhorring the evil and approving the good. All things to their view seemed to come alike to all. The translation of Enoch would tend mightily to correct this error. The best man amongst them is elected as the recipient of distinguished honour. In the translation of Enoch, God seemed to say,—“Although there is only *one* man amongst the millions of his age, who loves and honours me, that *one* lonely man I observe, I know, I will reward. ‘He that honoureth me, I will honour!’” It teaches men—

Fourthly: *That the mastering of sin is the way to a grand destiny.* Why did Enoch reach such a sublime destiny as this? He “walked with God.” He overcame the world, the flesh, and the devil. He extricated himself from the sinful forces that tied him to the earth. The world was no longer a congenial sphere for him. He was fitted for heaven, and to heaven he was borne. It is ever so. Just as a man overcomes sin, and walks closely with his Maker, he gets translated. Matter loses its hold upon him, and he comes more and more under the attractions of the world to come, until at length he is not, for God hath taken him. Enoch’s translation is, after all, scarcely more than the type of the death of pre-eminently holy men. Before the final day dawns, they feel their body is dead because of sin, their spirits alive because of righteousness.

III. HE TAUGHT THE WORLD BY HIS PREACHING. “And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, “Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment,” &c. From this it would seem that Enoch was a preacher. He taught by words as well as actions. In truth the words of such a man were actions. What he said, his life made luminous and mighty. Jude gives a specimen of his preaching, and it includes three things—

First: *The advent of the Judge.* "The Lord cometh." Probably he referred to that awful advent which was just at hand, in that deluge which engulfed the world. It is a solemn truth, that the Great Judge is always coming to the sinner. "Be ye ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh." But there is a grand final coming still awaiting this old earth. Whether Jude referred to this, or not, it is clearly and frequently held out in the Book of God. John saw it in vision. "I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life, was cast into the lake of fire." The scene overawes us with silence. Our poor descriptive words would be impertinence, if not impiety. His preaching includes—

Secondly: *The gathering of the saints.* "With ten thousands of his saints:—a definite number for an indefinite multitude. He will not come alone. The Great Sun will draw the planets after Him. When the Lord appeared to the Jews in the wilderness, He came "from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from Mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints." And Christ Himself tells us, "He will come with all his holy angels." It includes—

Thirdly: *The conviction of sinners.* "To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." The wickedness of men

consist in "deeds" and "speeches." On the day of judgment every sinner will be *convinced*, Enoch teaches, of *every* ungodly deed and *every* ungodly speech. This moral conviction is the most terrible feature of that final day. It is not the manifestation of the Judge *outside* the sinner, grand and awful as that will be, that will be the most distressing. It is his coming *into* the soul, carrying his court into the conscience, that will be the terror of that terrible event. Conviction will be carried into every sinner's inmost nature; the wrong of every ungodly deed and speech will be poignantly felt. This conviction implies two things. (1) A wonderful action of the human memory. For a sinner to be convinced of all the wrong things he has done, those wrong things must be recalled. Memory must open their graves and bring the ghastly monsters up to life. The circumstances of that period will be such as to act so mightily on the laws of association, that the whole of a man's past history shall give up its dead. This conviction implies. (2) A consciousness of freedom through the whole of the past life. If the sinner felt that he had not been *free* in his conduct, that he was necessitated to act as he did by the internal tendencies of his organization, or the external circumstances which surrounded him, he would not experience the conviction. It is the consciousness of his freedom now that will give the scorpion sting to the memory of forgotten crimes.

Is not Enoch one of the *world's great teachers*? He throws his light down the ages, and his beams fall on us in this house to-night.* Let us walk as he walked, and we shall reach a destiny not less sublime. That "*faith*" in the *invisible* and the *eternal*, which transfigured and translated him, we may have even in a *higher* form. For have we not higher revelations and higher aids? Let us "follow those who through faith and patience are now inheriting the promises."

* This is one of a series of Discourses now being delivered in Stockwell Congregational Church, on the World's Great Teachers.

A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonizing their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of their WIDEST truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

SUBJECT: *Paul's Journey from Cæsarea to Malta; or, the Voyage of Life.*

"And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul, and certain other prisoners, unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band. And, entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; one Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us," &c.—Acts xxvii. 1—44.

PAUL has done with Cæsarea; he leaves it to return no more. Before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa, he had so triumphantly refuted the charges of his enemies and established his own innocence, that Agrippa said, "This man might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed to Cæsar." But he has appealed to Cæsar, and "to Cæsar he must go." The whole of this chapter is a history of his voyage so far as Malta, and the history is one of thrilling incident, and great moral significance. Its nautical details, which are very full, have borne the test of the most searching investigations.* We cannot perhaps better treat this remarkable history than first, *by going through each verse with critical observations, and with homiletic reflections: and then using the whole as an illustration of the voyage of human life.*

I. A CRITICAL OBSERVATION OF THE HISTORY, WITH HOMILETIC

* See "The Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul." By JAMES SMITH, Esq.

REFLECTIONS. "And when it was determined that we should sail into Italy, they delivered Paul, and certain other prisoners, unto one named Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band. And entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning to sail by the coasts of Asia; one Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica, being with us." The determination mentioned here, does not refer to the purpose to visit Rome, which is expressed in verse 12, of chapter xxv., but to the manner and time of going there. It was by sea, and immediately. The "*we*" includes Luke the historian, and Aristarchus a Macedonian Christian. *They deliver Paul and certain other prisoners.* Who the other prisoners were, or what were their crimes, we are not told. With these criminals, Paul, the incorrupt and incorruptible, was delivered by Festus and others, into the custody of "*Julius, a centurion of Augustus' band.*" And he is now in one of those merchant vessels on which, in those days, even generals and princes had to depend for transit from one part to another of the great empire. The ship was lying in the harbour of Cæsarea, and was bound for Adramyttium, a seaport of Lycia, on the western coast of Asia Minor.* Aristarchus is mentioned elsewhere as Paul's companion in travels. (Acts xix. 29; xx. 4; Colossians iv. 10.) "And the next day we touched at Sidon, and Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself." One day's sail brought them to Sidon. The Gospel had been preached in Phœnicia long before (chap. xii. 19), and no doubt there was a Christian community at Sidon, some of the members of which, through the courtesy of Julius, Paul was now permitted to visit. The centurion gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself. His friends there would probably furnish him with supplies that would minister to his comfort during his long and perilous voyage. Why did the Roman soldier treat Paul with this consideration? Was it because of the good opinions which Festus and Agrippa had expressed, or was it because

* See "Conybeare and Howson" for an excellent description of the ships and navigation of the ancients.

of the majesty and goodness his presence and his bearing exhibited? Probably he felt the influence of both.

"And when we had launched from thence, we sailed under Cyprus, because the winds were contrary. And when we had sailed over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, a city of Lycia." The expression, "*we sailed under Cyprus*," means they kept near to it for shelter and safety. The ancient navigators, ignorant of the mariner's compass, and other means and resources now enjoyed, were accustomed to creep along the shores as much as possible in sight of land. With the nautical advantages of modern times, the open sea is considered the least perilous. Thus sailing on over the sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia, they came to Myra, a city of Lycia. Lycia was a maritime district of Asia Minor, bounded on the north by Pamphylia, and on the east, west, and south by the sea. Myra was the capital of the district, and situated on the coast. Here they landed.

"And there the centurion found a ship of Alexandria, sailing into Italy: and he put us therein." The first part of the voyage is ended, the second part is commenced.

The population of Rome, at this time numerous, were supplied with grain in a great measure from Egypt, whose Nile made it the granary of nations. *The ship of Alexandria* now found at Myra was laden with wheat. It must have been a large vessel, for, besides its cargo, it had two hundred and sixty souls on board, after the centurion, Paul, and his companions, and the prisoners had embarked. Adverse winds had probably driven the ship on the coast of Asia Minor.

"And when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce were come over against Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we sailed under Crete, over against Salmone: and, hardly passing it, came unto a place which is called The Fair Havens; nigh whereunto was the city of Lasea." Several places are here mentioned. *Cnidus*. This was a city, situated on a rocky and mountainous peninsula of the same name, in the province of Caria, between the island of Rhodes and Coos or Cos. It was

distinguished for the worship of Venus, and contained the celebrated statue of that goddess by Praxiteles. *Crete*, now called *Candia*, an island fronting the *Ægean Sea*, one hundred and seventy miles long, and about thirty or forty broad, distinguished for its salubrity, fertility and beauty. *Salmone*, a promontory, at the east end of the island, which they doubled, and sailed under *Crete*, or south of it, to escape the contrary winds. Having passed *Salmone* with great difficulty, "*hardly passing it*," being almost driven on it, they steered round the coast end of the island and came to a roadstead, a species of harbour, "*called the Fair Havens*," near the city of *Lasea*.

"Now, when much time was spent, and when sailing was now dangerous, because the fast was now already past, Paul admonished them, and said unto them, *Sirs*, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our lives. Nevertheless the centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship, more than those things which were spoken by Paul. And because the haven was not commodious to winter in, the more part advised to depart thence also, if by any means they might attain to *Phenice*, and there to winter; which is an haven of *Crete*, and lieth toward the south-west and north-west. . . . And when the south wind blew softly, supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by *Crete*. But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called *Euroclydon*. And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive. And running under a certain island which is called *Clauda*, we had much work to come by the boat: which when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the ship; and fearing lest they should fall into the quicksands, strake sail, and so were driven. And we being exceedingly tossed with a tempest, the next day they lightened the ship. And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away."

A crisis is now reached. No doubt when they started, they expected to reach Italy before the dangerous time of navigating the Mediterranean arrived, but contrary winds had embarrassed and detained them, and now the tempestuous season had set in. "The fast was now already past." The fast of the great day of atonement, which occurred at the time of the autumnal equinox, was, no doubt, meant. The fast, of course, is not mentioned here as influencing the weather, but as a period of time. Paul felt the crisis. Though not professionally a sailor, he was not ignorant of the navigation of that sea. He knew something of its dangers. Two years before this, in his letter to the Corinthians, he says, "*Thrice have I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep.*" He sounds the warning, "Sirs, I perceive that this voyage will be with hurt and much damage," &c. Whether he speaks from mere human forecast, or from supernatural inspiration, is a question answered by the distinct assurance he afterwards gave, as recorded in the 24th verse. His warning, however, goes for nothing. "The centurion believed the master and the owner of the ship more than those things which were spoken by Paul." It would seem that the "more part," the greater part of the crew, and the passengers agreed with the advice of the master and the owner. They considered that the haven was not sufficiently commodious to winter in, and hence they determined to leave "the Fair Havens." At first when they moved off, things proved propitious—appeared to indicate that they had taken the right course. "The south wind blew softly. . . . Supposing that they had obtained their purpose, loosing thence, they sailed close by Crete." The wind had probably before been a head wind, blowing from the west; it now veered to the south, and was favourable. A change, however, soon takes place.

"But not long after there arose against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon." Euroclydon, derived from two words, meaning east wind and wave—may be rendered the wave-stirring east wind. This was a wind which veered to different points of the compass, from north-east to south-

east, and is probably the one known at the present day under the name of *Levanter*—the country at the eastern extremity of the Mediterranean Sea being called the *Levant*. They are soon now plunged into distress. “And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we let her drive.” The wind seized her, and carried her along by its resistless force. Being unable to face the tempest, or poetically, as the original implies, to look it in the eye, they gave up all command, and let her drive along at the mercy of the tempest. “And running under a certain island which is called *Clauda*”—a small island lying south-west of *Crete*—we had much work to come by the boat.” With the utmost difficulty, in consequence of the fury of wind and wave, they managed to reach the little boat which followed them, and lifted it on board the vessel. Having secured the boat, they commenced to undergird the ship, and to “strake sail.” With cables or chains they girded the body of the vessel to prevent her timber from starting by the concussions of the sea, and to lessen the force of the wind, upon the vessel they strake sail, lowered the mast, and “so were driven” on by the force of the elements. Meanwhile the storm continues to increase in violence, for being “exceedingly tossed with the tempest, the next day they lightened the ship, and the third day we cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.” This was a desperate effort. The sacrifice of the freight, the baggage, the rigging, and the furniture of the vessel. “Skin for skin, all that a man hath he will give in exchange for his life.” “And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay on us, all hope that we should be saved was then taken away.” What a terrific position! Mariners then having no compass, they could only tell their direction by the heavenly bodies, but the heavenly bodies had not shown themselves to these sailors for “many days,” and the minds of all on board sunk in the depths of despair. “All hope that we should be saved was then taken away.”

Now these eleven verses, extending from the ninth to the

twentieth inclusive, suggest four general truths of universal importance, in relation to—

MAN'S COUNSELLORS IN PASSING THROUGH LIFE.

First: That men in passing through this life have *true and false counsellors*. Paul here stands for the true counsellor. He admonishes the mariners of their danger should they take a certain course. (Ver. 10.) "The master and the owner of the ship" stand for the false counsellors. Their advice was contrary to that of Paul's. (Ver. 11.) Thus it ever is men have counsellors true and false. Some pointing them to the right path and some to the wrong. Some the apostles of God, and some the emissaries of hell.

Secondly: That men are ever disposed to *follow the false rather than the true*. The centurion and the "more part," the greater portion on board, rejected the counsels of Paul, and followed those of the master and the owner. It may be that some of them considered it a piece of impertinence on Paul's part, himself a landsman, to give nautical advice. Men ever follow the false in preference to the true. It is more congenial, more popular, more promising.

Thirdly: That following the false, often appears at *first to be the better course*. When the vessel, contrary to the advice of Paul, moved off from the Fair Havens, things looked propitiously. "The south wind blew softly." Perhaps under the bright sky, and before favourable winds, many on board laughed at Paul on the first day. So it is a false sinful course frequently appears at first desirable. Youth especially feel it so.

Fourthly: That the false ultimately *conducts to the most terrible disasters*. The soft south wind gives way to the Euroclydon, which hurls the bark into the utmost distress. "Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

"But, after long abstinence, Paul stood forth in the midst of them, and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer

or there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul ; thou must be brought before Cæsar : and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer : for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island."

When Paul thus interposed their distress had reached almost the *utmost point of extremity*. "No one," says a modern writer, "who has never been in a leaking ship, in a long-continued gale, can know what is suffered under such circumstances. The strain both of mind and body, the incessant demand for the labour of all the crew, the terror of the passengers, the hopeless working at the pumps, the labouring of the ship's frame and cordage, the driving of the storm, the benumbing effect of the cold and wet, make up a scene of no ordinary confusion, anxiety, and fatigue." But two circumstances greatly aggravated the case of this ship's distress. There was the *darkness*. No sun, or stars, for many days appeared, not an unusual circumstance during a Levanter. There was *hunger* ; "*long abstinence*." The want of food led to the pain of exhaustion, and the bitter gnawing of hunger. When their distress had reached its extremity, when the last ray of hope had burnt out within them, and the cold shivering midnight of despair was settling on their spirits, at this point a light from heaven breaks on them, and that light leads to their salvation. That light comes through Paul. "Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me," &c., &c.

The verses treated homiletically may be taken to illustrate—

GOD'S MODE OF DEALING WITH MAN IN HIS EXTREMITY ;
and three things are observable—

First: *He begins by aggravating the distress*. "Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have sailed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss." These words

mean, you have brought all this distress upon yourselves, you are virtually the authors of all this, had you accepted instead of rejecting the counsel of wisdom, you would have been spared all this harm and loss. How would this reproof aggravate for the moment the agony of that dark hour? It would call a new faculty up,—conscience, and make it sting the sufferer. When a man is made to feel that his suffering is not merely a calamity, but a crime, it comes on him with new intensity and weight. Thus God ever deals with men. The first thing that He does to help a world in misery is to convince it that its misery is self-produced. His first words are to it, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." And He goes on to convince it of sin, righteousness and judgment.

Secondly : *He proceeds to mitigate the distress.* "Now I exhort you to be of good cheer : for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship." After the wound comes the salve. After sinners have passed through the agony of remorse, have experienced the workings of genuine repentance, there comes to them the message of divine comfort. "Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Thirdly : *He does both through his servants.* Through Paul, God appealed to the distressed men on board the storm-tossed and sinking vessel. "There stood by me this night an angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul ; thou must be brought before Cæsar : and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee."

Three things are here to be noticed. (1.) The essential character of God's servants. What is *indispensable* in the character of a true servant? Paul's language here answers the question. (a) A practical consciousness of God's absolute claim to our being. "Whose I am." I am not the proprietor, but the trustee of myself. I am the property of another. (b) A constant working out of God's will in our being. "Whom I serve." The first question of Paul was "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Thou hast a will concerning me ; that will I am

bound and willing to follow out. This is the essence of a true servant. (2.) The high privilege of God's servants. What is that? Communications from the heavenly Father: "There stood by me this night the angel of God." Why did God's angel come to Paul rather than to the rest on board that labouring barque? Because Paul was his true servant. "The secrets of the Lord are with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenants." (3.) The social value of God's servants. "God hath given thee all them that sail with thee." Paul was the temporal saviour of all on board. The world is preserved for the sake of the good. Abraham is an example.

"But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven up and down in Adria, about midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country; and sounded, and found it twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms. Then fearing lest they should have fallen upon rocks they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day. And as the shipmen were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down the boat into the sea, under colour as though they would have cast anchors out of the foreship, Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved. Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off." Though the words of Paul assuaged, perhaps, to some extent, the terror of the crew and the passengers, outward nature seemed unchanged. The storm raged on with unabated fury, until fourteen days had elapsed. After drifting through the sea of Adria, through this terrible period of darkness and tempest, in the depth of the fourteenth night, "The shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country." The roar of the breakers would inform the veteran sailor that land was not far off. To ascertain how near the land they were "They sounded, and found it twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further, they sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms." The somewhat rapid approach to

land, indicated by the sounding, started a new fear ; the fear that the vessel would be dashed on the rock and struck to pieces. "Then fearing least we should have fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors out of the stern, and wished for the day." Though anchoring vessels by the *stern* is not, it would seem, usual, it is sometimes done. "So it was at the battle of the Nile. And when ships are about to attack batteries, it is customary for them to go into action prepared to anchor in this way. This was the case at Algiers. There is still greater interest in quoting the instance of Copenhagen, not only from the accounts we have of the precision with which each ship let go her anchors astern as she arrived nearly opposite her appointed station, but because it is said that Nelson stated after the battle that he had that morning been reading the twenty-seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles."* The sailors, notwithstanding the anchorage, felt they were still in danger of being hurled on the rocks, and utterly regardless of the lives of others, cunningly endeavoured to save themselves. These verses may be used homiletically to illustrate that *selfishness* which is the root of all evil and the curse of the world.

SELFISHNESS.

Observe four things—

First: *The hideous character of selfishness.* See it in these "shipmen." Here is its *cowardice*. They sought to flee out of the ship. Selfishness is essentially cowardly, disinterestedness is the soul of heroism. Here is its *cunning*. "Under colour," pretending "as though they would have cast anchors," they let down the boat into the sea, in order to escape the danger. Selfishness always works "*under colour*." It has always a guise. In all the trades, professions, and interests of life it works, but always under a hypocritic garb. It dares not show itself. Here is *cruelty*. Of all on board they only knew how to manage. If they left, all who remained would perish. Yet what cared they?

* See Conybeare and Howson's "Life and Epistles of St. Paul."

Self was everything. Selfishness is always ready to sacrifice others for its own ends.

Secondly : *The manly exposure of selfishness.* There was one on board whose keen eye penetrated the motives of these men, discovered and exposed their base conduct. Paul in this case is a type of those few men in every age to whom, through the purity of their own motives, and the clearness of their own moral intuitions, it is given to discern spirits. They see baseness, falseness, and self-seeking, under the garb of dignity, benevolence, truth. It would be well for selfish men to remember that there are men, few indeed in number, who can see through them, and estimate them at their true value.

Thirdly : *The divine lesson for selfishness.* "Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved." Though the promise of safety had gone forth, yet its fulfilment depended on the contingency of human means and efforts. The lesson is this—Salvation depends on doing the work that God allots us. God had determined that all on board this vessel should be saved on the condition that the sailors did their work. *Men cannot be saved by doing the work of selfishness.* "He that seeketh his life shall lose it."

Fourthly : *The ultimate frustration of selfishness.* "Then the soldiers cut off the ropes of the boat, and let her fall off." With that short sword with which the Roman legions cleft their way through every obstacle to universal victory, they "cut the ropes," and the boat fell off, and if not instantly swamped, drifted off to leeward into the darkness, and was dashed to pieces on the rocks. Thus they were frustrated, and thus all selfishness must ultimately be thwarted and confounded.

"And while the day was come on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, this day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried, and continued feasting, having taken nothing. Wherefore, I pray you to take some meat, for this is for your health : for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you. And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all : and

when he had broken it, he began to eat. Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat. And we were in all in the ship two hundred and threescore and sixteen souls." With land not far distant, the vessel anchored. The sailors necessitated to stick to the ship, and day approaching, notwithstanding the continued fury of the storm, there is some indication of improvement. The first grey beams of the morning dawn would do much to assuage the tempestuous anxieties and fears of all on board. Paul avails himself of this moment to raise the drooping spirits, and to strengthen the exhausted frames of his fellow-passengers, and the crew. His conduct on this occasion displays some of—

THE LEADING ATTRIBUTES OF A GREAT CHARACTER.

First : *Social considerateness.* The emaciated appearance of all on board, through lack of food, touched his generous heart. "And while the day was coming on, Paul besought them all to take meat, saying, this day is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting, having taken nothing. Wherefore, I pray you take some meat." The expression, "having taken nothing," is not to be understood literally; it means, having taken nothing equal to their requirements. The feelings of alarm and anxiety with which their souls had been flooded for fourteen days and nights, had, according to a physiological law, deadened their appetite, and destroyed all their desire for food. Paul, with the tact of a practical philosopher, sought to resuscitate their inclination for food by allaying their fears, "for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you." This social considerateness Paul had often displayed before in his conduct, always inculcated in his teaching; and it is an essential attribute of that Christianity in which he was a practical believer, and a heroic apostle. We are only great, we are only Christian, as we bear one another's burdens, and thus fulfil the law of Christ. Here is—

Secondly : *Calm self-control.* He was in the midst of the most agitating scenes. The boisterous billows—the furious

hurricane—the reeling, plunging, shattered ship—the two hundred threescore and sixteen terror-stricken men, were confessedly scenes of terrible excitement, yet how sublimely calm this man is ! “He took bread, and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all : and when he had broken it, he began to eat.” A finer picture of moral majesty in man could scarcely be conceived than this. The philosophy of his tranquillity, we know. It was faith in that God, whose he was and whom he served.

Thirdly : *Practical religiousness*. “He gave thanks to God in presence of them all.” This was according to the Christian practice. (Matt. xv. 36, xxvi. 27 ; John vi. 11—23 ; Romans xiv. 6 ; 1 Cor. x. 13, xi. 24, xiv. 17 ; Eph. v. 20 ; 1 Thess. v. 18.) This thanking God before food, on Paul’s part, was not a matter of fanaticism, form, or parade ; it was an expression of the spirit of his life. Paul lived in the divine ; religiousness was his moral heart. Here is—

Fourthly : *Influencing power*. What he said and what he did struck new energy into the heart of all. “Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat.” So inspiring were the words and example of the apostle, that he re-animated all with the energy of hope. A soul strong with goodness can energize others.

“And when they had eaten enough, they lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea. And when it was day, they knew not the land : but they discovered a certain creek with a shore, into the which they were minded, if it were possible, [to thrust in the ship. And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves unto the sea, and loosed the rudder bands, and hoisted up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore. And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground ; and the fore part stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but the hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves. And the soldiers’ counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out, and escape. But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose, and commanded that they

which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land : and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land."

Having followed Paul's advice and example, and eaten enough of food, with revived spirits, and reinvigorated frames, they put forth fresh efforts to reach the shore in safety. To relieve the still sinking vessel, they cast out the wheat—the remaining portion of the cargo—into the sea. Meanwhile, day broke on them, and the land became visible, but they knew not what land it was. So long had they been driven hither and thither in the tempest, that they were uncertain of their location. However, "*they discerned a certain creek with a shore*"—a bay or inlet—breaking up from the sea into the land, and they determined, if possible, to run the vessel ashore at that point. This was a terrible crisis. It was the last effort. The utmost caution was now required. They took up the anchors, cutting them adrift, and letting them fall into the sea, "They loosed the rudder-bands, and hoisted up the main-sail to the wind, and made toward shore." Dashed by the force of the tempest, the vessel is soon hurled thither. "And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground." Amid conflicting eddies, "the forepart"—the bows or forecastle—"stuck fast," plunged into the sand "and remained unmoveable." The stern, meanwhile exposed to the fury of the breakers is broken to pieces. "The hinder part was broken with the violence of the waves." Now it is a question of life or death with each man for himself. Strange that any, at that terrible moment, should have thought of anything save their own preservation. But the soldiers thought of the prisoners, and desired to kill them. The strictness of the Roman discipline was such, that soldiers were held responsible for the escape of those under their keeping, and were visited with an equal punishment to that to which the prisoners themselves were exposed. Hence the counsel of these soldiers to kill the prisoners. The centurion interposed to thwart this murderous

project, and he does so for the sake of Paul, who was a prisoner, and who had saved the vessel.

“But the centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea, and get to land: and the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.” Thus all are rescued, and thus according to the word of Paul, as given him by the angel, *there was no loss of any man's life, but of the ship.*” From these verses we may learn four things concerning—

THE BAD, THE GOOD, THE DIVINE, AND HUMAN.

First: *The brutalizing tendency of a military life.* One might have thought that the common trials of the perilous voyage, and the terrible shipwreck, would have made every heart soft with tender sympathies for his suffering companion. A common sorrow tends to a common sympathy; but these soldiers meditated the cold-blooded murder of men who had done them no harm, and who had participated in the same trials as themselves, and one of whom was the saver of their lives. Why was this? The soldiers were trained to bloody deeds. Human life to them was very cheap. We may learn from this—

Secondly: *The social value of a good man.* The salvation of passengers and crew must, under God, be ascribed to Paul, and the other prisoners were saved from the heartless massacre of the soldiers, because of him. No one but God can tell the social value of one good man, in a neighbourhood or in a nation. Ten righteous men would have saved Sodom, &c. We may learn from this—

Thirdly: *The faithfulness of the divine word.* God had said through Paul, that no life should be lost, that they should be cast upon a certain island, that the ship should be destroyed, and here, on the shores of Malta, is the fulfilment of that word. The floating wreck, the two hundred three-score and sixteen men standing on the shore, and the very scene of the

whole were demonstrations of divine veracity. Ah, "Heaven and earth shall pass away," &c. We may learn from this—

Fourthly: *The necessity of human effort.* Although the safety attained had been promised by God, yet the human agency employed seemed indispensable. In treating this remarkable history further, we shall use it—

II. AS AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE VOYAGE OF HUMAN LIFE.*

Homiletic Notes on the Epistle of James.

(No. XI.)

SUBJECT: *Semblant and Sincere Faith.*

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works?" &c.—James ii. 14—26.

BY noticing that the language of James here is not "if a man hath faith," but "if a man *say* he hath faith," we get the key to the meaning of the paragraph. And this key is needed, for it must be granted that at first sight the argument seems to contradict the Pauline teaching about faith. (Rom. iii. 28; Gal. ii. 8.) Hence the necessity of our laying due emphasis on "say" in the 14th verse. Then, as Neander well reminds us, we see how, "as on all occasions, James separates appearance and reality from each other, and combats those tendencies which put forth the semblance from the substance; so he is arguing against faith, which does not show itself in corresponding good works." Both Paul and James teach that man is saved by faith, whilst, because of the different needs of those to whom the apostles wrote,

* See HOMILIST, first series, vol. vii. page 145.

James with more detail than Paul, describes what is a semblant as distinguishable from a sincere faith.

I. SEMBLANT FAITH. We learn here—

First: *It is inoperative.* Two evidences of its ineffectiveness are here given. "*Without works.*" Alford says, "by works, must be understood not mere ceremonial acts, but those acts in the life which are proofs and fruits of faith." The faith that is not the cause of many results, and the impulse of many deeds, the root that does not father and feed branches and blossoms, foliage and fruits, is to be reckoned a mere pretence. "*Dead in itself.*" Bengel and Alford show that the expression our translation renders, "is dead, being alone," is more correctly translated, "absolutely dead." Not merely do we find this semblance of faith resultless, but in itself too weak to be a cause. Of such spurious faith it is true as of a corpse, not only are the extremities, but the very heart also is dead.

Secondly: *It is unbeneficial.* "What doth it profit?" Nothing. Can such faith save a man? Assuredly, no. The answer is powerfully given by an illustration James here employs. He pictures a "love" that would produce no results—love "without works." And showing how utterly useless such love would be, how it would leave the hungry unfed, and the naked unclothed, he says, even so with similar faith. A love without expression by activity, is at once recognised as being a useless, unbeneficial thing. By analogy we are taught that a faith without activities is a useless, unbeneficial thing, for in an imaginary dialogue it is shown how faith can only be expressed—be exhibited—by works.

Thirdly: *It is unvirtuous.* There is no virtue in mere intellectual assent, even if it is assent to the sublimest truth. For the apostle quotes what was the very flower, the distinguishing glory of Jewish and Christian creed—"There is one God." And yet he shows that the mere possession even of that creed is in itself no virtue, for devils also believe it and tremble. The word *φρίσσει*, that expresses the horror

that is the result of devils' faith, is extremely powerful. It denotes the commotion of the sea, a mighty shuddering, a tempestuous terror. Since, though hell has no charity, and no hope, it has some sort of faith, we are warned against counting such a faith as any virtue.

II. GENUINE FAITH.

First: *It has practical expression.* "I will show my faith by my works." Wherever, as with Abraham, there is sincere faith, it utters itself in works. Religious faith is too strong for mere words; it energises the life. When the apostle says, it has works, he does not mean mere ceremonial works, nor those of worship and benevolence alone, but all the acts in the life which are fruits and proofs of faith.

Secondly: *It is essentially beneficial.* It benefits (α) *self*. By such faith Abraham became "the friend of God." His love and life were the love and life of Divine friendship. Had his been merely a semblant faith, we might have briefly asked concerning him, "Can faith save him"? But since his was sincere faith, we see how he was approved of God as righteous. It benefits (β), *society*. It made Rahab a benefactor to the Israelites. And so all believers are blessings. Faith is the very root of all true philanthropy and religion.

(No. XII.)

SUBJECT: *The Discipline of the Tongue.*

"My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man," &c.—James iii. 1—12.

THE apostle is showing, especially to those whose mere semblant faith makes them eager to teach, the perils of speech. In his argument with them against this tendency to be "masters," that is teachers, critics, censors, he insists—

I. THAT DISCIPLINE OF THE TONGUE IS DEMANDED.

First: *Because the utterances of the tongue are a test of*

character. Speech is often so impulsive that it reveals the character, either intentionally or accidentally. The tongue is of all organs most difficult completely to control. It is almost the last citadel to yield to the aggression of the Gospel, for continually Christian men show by the speech of anger or censoriousness, or of slander or bigotry that all the foes of virtue and of God are not yet exterminated.

Secondly : *Because the tongue is an instrument of immense power.* It is compared here to a helm that guides a majestic vessel, determining often its safety or its wreck ; to a fire that can consume the "whole cycle" of creation ; to an untamed and poisonous reptile, darting the arrows of death. It has power (1) *over its possessor.* Speech has a reflex influence. And so our own tongue can defile our own body. By our utterances our emotions are deepened. (2) *In our social life.* We teach and mislead, we curse and bless by the tongue. "Speech," says Manton, "maketh man a sociable creature, and yet it makes us a bane and a blasting to society." "Life and death are in the power of the tongue." (3) *In the realm of religion.* "Therewith bless we God." There could not be a word more accurately expressing the instrumental sense than the *év.* It is as *clad in*, and working in the sphere of, that this word is found, as we say "a man in armour." By speech we can discharge the highest services of religion.

II. THAT DISCIPLINE OF THE TONGUE IS DIFFICULT. Its difficulty arises from—

First : *Facility of speech.* The tongue in its exquisitely easy motion and prompt performance of our will, has become, as all pervertible power is, a snare.

Secondly : *Tendency to speech.* Not only do we speak as soon as, but sometimes almost before, we think.

Thirdly : *Temptation to speech.* There is so much to provoke speech ; in every hour and in every place, that the tongue of the frank, the open, the sensitive, is constantly challenged.

Fourthly: *Habit of speech.* The custom of uttering all that is in us, except in dwarfed natures, so grows with our growth, that the habit becomes nature.

Thus admitting candidly all the difficulties of right discipline of the tongue, the apostle warns us against its neglect and entreats us to its attainment.

Bristol.

U. R. THOMAS.

Germs of Thought.

SUBJECT: *The Foreign God.*

“Is not God in the height of heaven? and behold the height of the stars, how high they are! And thou sayest, How doth God know? can he judge through the dark cloud?”—Job xxii. 12, 13.

Analysis of Homily the Seven Hundred and Sixty-Eighth.

THESE are the words of Eliphaz to Job, and they show, on the part of the speaker, *controversial uncharitableness, and theological ignorance.* Eliphaz is reasoning with Job on the procedure of God in relation to human sin. The great principle that he contends for, is that great suffering implies great crime. Because Job would not admit this, he ascribes to Job an opinion which he had never avowed, and never held; that opinion was that God is too distant to notice the imperfections of men. “Is not God in the height of heaven?” &c. This ascribing to an opponent in argument, an opinion which he does not hold, is an uncharitableness very common in human debate—more general, perhaps, in theological disputation than anywhere else. On purely denominational platforms you will frequently hear men—especially those who live in and by demominationalism—attribute views to their opponents as repugnant to their spirit and creed as they are to their own. The words show not only controversial uncharitableness, but *theo-*

logical ignorance on the part of Eliphaz. The words imply his belief that unless the Governor of the world followed sin at once with its adequate punishment, He must be too distant in space to take cognisance of human affairs. He could not see how Job could oppose the great doctrine in dispute, unless he held the *remoteness* of God from man, and his consequent ignorance of the affairs of human life. He could not see how God's omniscience, and his proximity to man, could be held, and the adequate and immediate punishment of sin be denied. Eliphaz, in fact, seemed to be ignorant that the government of this world was mediatorial, that God dealt with man here, not on the ground of his conduct, but of Christ's mediation.

Although the language of the text was not applicable to Job, it is applicable to millions; it expresses a tendency prevalent in all unregenerate natures, *a tendency to regard God as at a distance*. It might be well for us to sketch some of the *symptoms, causes, and the cure* of this tendency.

I. THE SYMPTOMS. What are the symptoms?

First: *Images of idolatry*. Idolatry is an effort of the human soul to bring the god it craves for near to it. Hence images. The heathens feel, as all feel, that they want a God, but that their God is too distant to hold fellowship with them, and hence they make, and worship, representations of Him.

Secondly: *Immorality of life*. You can scarcely account for the prevalence of sin in every department of human life without admitting this tendency in the human heart to keep God at a distance. If men felt that God was ever present—that "his eyes were in every place, beholding the evil and the good," would they not experience a mighty power restraining them from evil?

Thirdly: *Formality in worship*. The importance which is attached to periods, to places, and rituals, in worship, are unmistakeable symptoms of this tendency. If the glorious truth, announced by the Heavenly Teacher to the woman at

Samaria, "God is a spirit," &c., penetrated and possessed Christendom, all sacerdotalism and sectarianism would cease.

Fourthly: *Inactivity of mind.* How sluggish are the immortal minds of the millions of this earth! With what stolid indifference whole generations of souls spend their mortal life under those awful heavens, and on this beautiful earth, and, "like dumb, driven cattle," pass away into eternity. Would it be so if they felt that the Omniscient God was ever with them? No, this consciousness would stir them into intense activity, would make their life a thing of grand excitement.

II. CAUSES. What are the causes? Many things have been ascribed as causes which are not causes, such as—

First: *The mediatory method of divine operation.* God does not deal with men directly, but through a system of secondary causes. It is so in *physical* matters. We come into existence, we are nurtured into manhood, we are kept in life, not by the *direct* agency of God, but by a system of means. It is so in *spiritual* matters. He educates, regenerates, sanctifies, and saves souls through a system of means. Did He deal with us in physical matters as He dealt with the Jews when He fed them by miracle, or in spiritual matters as He did with Abraham, Paul, and others, when He appeared to them and called them by his voice, we should have more striking impressions of his nearness.

Secondly: *Our power of spontaneous action.* We are endowed with the power of *self-motion*, we move hither and thither at our choice. We are unconscious of any restraining force. Whatever revolution may take place in our views, affections, purposes, we have still the feeling of freedom. If we felt his finger on the springs of our being, though we should lose the dignity of our nature, we might feel the consciousness of his presence. But though He acts on us, it is by drawing, not driving; it is in harmony with the full and free play of our faculties.

Thirdly: *The constancy of natural laws.* Nature proceeds

on her wonted path and knows no deviation. Since the days of Christ, all things continue as they were from the beginning. Were He to break in occasionally, as He did upon Sinai of old, making the mountains quake and the earth tremble, we might perhaps be more sensible of his nearness.

Fourthly : *The disorders of the moral world.* Whilst in the natural world all is harmony, in the moral world all is confusion, and because of this men are tempted to say, God has left the world. He has retired into his pavilion. He allows things to take their course. We deny that *any* of these are *causes*, for the simple reason that where *all* these have existed there have been in millions of instances those who have *practically felt the nearness of God*, and who have walked with Him as Enoch did of old.

The *one* great cause of this tendency is to be found in the heart. Men have sinned, their consciences accuse them, they are afraid of God, and their fear keeps them at a distance. Adam sinned and he fled from God. The unregenerate heart does not like to retain God, its language is, "Depart from me, I desire not a knowledge of thee." A *vindictive theology*—a theology which preaches God as a God of Vengeance—increases the power of this cause in Christendom.

III. CURES. Is there a cure for this tendency? Is there anything that can make God a *present* God? Bring him from the height of heaven beyond the stars into conscious contact with the experience of daily life. There is. What? *Philosophic reasoning.* Correct reasoning on the subject must indeed convince man that if there be a God, He must be everywhere, and, therefore, ever at hand. But men may reach this conclusion, and yet practically regard their God as distant. Will *Natural Science* do it? True natural science must connect God with everything. With the movements of an atom, as well as the revolution of a globe. With the opening of a rose, as well as the spreading out the firmament. With the whisper of a zephyr, as well as the roar of a thunder-

storm, but men may scientifically believe this and yet practically keep their God at a distance. Will *Scriptural theology* do it? The Bible is full of the doctrine that God is everywhere. "Do not I fill Heaven and earth, saith the Lord," &c. "Whither shall I flee from thy presence," &c. "In him we live, and move," &c. But there are those who profess to believe this, and yet practically regard their God as *distant*. What then will do it? LOVE. This is the only power in the universe. This never fails to do it. Let God be *loved* supremely and He will be brought nearer to the soul. The most loved is always the nearest to the heart. Love brings its object into us. Gives it the choicest place in the temple of thought. Enoch loved God and he walked with Him. David loved God, and he set the Lord always before him. Paul loved God, and the Lord stood by him. The generating, nurturing, and perfecting this love in the heart is by the revelation of God to man by Jesus Christ.



SUBJECT : *Sins of the Tongue.*

"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."—Jas. i. 26.

Analysis of Homily the Seven Hundred and Sixty-Ninth.

AN unbridled tongue is always a great evil ; it engenders strife, and causes trouble to the talker *himself*, as well as to *others*. Unbridled tongues are of two kinds ; one kind utters *untruths*, *slanders*, and *misrepresentations* ; the other talks *rashly* and *imprudently* about things that are true. We shall notice—

I. THE UNBRIDLED TONGUE IS A LYING TONGUE. A lie has been well defined as "*an intention to deceive.*" Therefore *all manner* of deceit, tergiversation, detraction, special pleading, undercolouring, or overcolouring is simply and scripturally *unmitigated lying*. And a "lying tongue is an abomination to the Lord."

First : *Some men lie maliciously*, not so much to benefit themselves as with premeditation to injure others. The tongues of such men (or women) are "set on fire of hell." Such people are diabolical—such tongues are hellish. (1.) They may be actuated by a spirit of revenge for some real or fancied injury. (2.) Or they may wish to benefit themselves at the expense of others. (This particularly distinguishes the "lie commercial ;" it is found on the exchange, and wherever *short measure* and *light weight* are.) (3.) Or they may wish to set two persons at variance, and, therefore, misrepresent the actions and motives of the one to the other. Such men do great harm to families, communities, and churches. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." God hateth a lying tongue."

Secondly : *Some do much harm by lying inconsiderately, we might say, almost unconsciously.* These people are more *weak* than *malicious*. It is a habit of theirs not to repeat what they have heard, precisely as they heard it. There is a magnifying, or modifying of the narrative, so that the relation conveys a wrong impression. Such men injure at least *two* persons : the person who spoke and the person who was the subject of conversation.

Thirdly : *People with unbridled tongues are generally very idle.* Having little to do (at least *doing* little) they take a benevolent interest in the affairs of their neighbours ; and no doubt it is from want of healthy occupation, that the "little member" has so much exercise. These are tattling gossips—the newsvendors of a neighbourhood.

Fourthly : *The unbridled tongue is often the tongue of a hasty, choleric person.* Fearful are the torrents of angry words which such a tongue sends forth. Like a stream of burning lava it rushes madly on, hissing, poisonous, and destructive.

Fifthly : *The unbridled tongue does incalculable mischief in the Church*—either through lying or imprudence.

Sixthly : *An unbridled tongue generally characterizes all partisans, in the political, theological, or literary world.*

The virtues of opponents, if acknowledged at all, are "damned with faint praise," while their shortcomings are magnified, and their views are *studiously* distorted and misrepresented. (This game is a favourite one with narrow controversialists when they have a bad cause to defend.) By similar "black and magic arts" national antipathies are engendered, fostered, and perpetuated, and thus wars arise.

II. AN UNBRIDLED TONGUE INDICATES A VAIN RELIGION. "Vain," (*μάραιος*, deceptive, depraved, perverse. The man may talk as he pleases of *others*; but his *own* religion is *vain*. (1) *He deceives his own heart.*" Because he does not commit "gross sin," probably, he thinks he is better than his brethren, while it would be impossible to estimate the evil caused by his own words. (2) *He only "seems to be religious."* He may be noisily zealous, but his *religion* is only like the whitewash of the sepulchre's outside. (3) *He proves that at least one great ruling sin remains unsubdued in his own heart.* Where there is true religion, the ruling passion, the *besetting sin* is first attacked, because it is generally the most conspicuous one. The key of the position must be taken first.

III. AN UNBRIDLED TONGUE HAS SAD CONSEQUENCES.

1. *To the person himself.* (1) His mind must be unhappy, filled with jealousy, envy, and hate. He thinks others talk about *him*, as he talks about *them*. (2) No one will trust him—they will listen to him with misgivings. This makes him unhappy. (3) He gets into trouble when his lies are found out. "The lying tongue is but for a moment." (Prov. xii. 19.) (4) God knows his character, for "He searcheth the hearts," &c. "Nothing is hid from him with whom we have to do," &c. God "hateth a lying tongue." "Liars shall have their portion in the lake," &c.

2. *To others.* (1) Trouble, sorrow, injustice. In short, LYING is the grand characteristic (if not the root) of all vicious conduct, of which Satan is an embodiment. And SINCERITY is the grand characteristic of a virtuous character, and is allied to

all that is noble, and lovely, and God-like. God demands "TRUTH in the inner man." Christ was the very incarnation of truth. We must grow up *into his likeness*.

(1) Let us beware of giving the reins to our tongue. It must be bridled; its restless impulses must be restrained.

(2) For every word—even for every *idle* word—an account must be rendered to God.

Stanley, St. Leonard's.

T. D. JONES, M.A.

Misapplied Texts.

By Rev. WM. WEBSTER, M.A., late Fellow of Queen's College,
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Greek Testament, &c., &c.

(No. IV.)

"Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves."—2 Cor. iii. 5.

"Without me ye can do nothing."—John xv. 5.

THESE passages occur in different parts of Scripture, which treat upon very different subjects, and have no connection with each other. But in practice they are frequently misapplied, and brought together in juxtaposition, so as to overstate the doctrine of human weakness and depravity—to represent man as a mere machine, and to inculcate fatalism.

Bishop Andrews, in his Sermons on Prayer, has one on 2 Cor. iii. 5, in which he gravely teaches, that in effecting anything, there are seven degrees to be considered, of which to think that which is good is the least and lowest degree. Now in 2 Cor. iii. 5, the word rendered "think," is λογισασθαι, which in many other passages is translated *conclude*, *reckon*, *impute*, *account*, to form a conclusion after balancing the account. Such, too, is its meaning in this passage, "to reason out, to find out by thinking, any such inference." The apostle gives a glowing picture of the success which attended his

labours at Corinth. "Ye are manifestly declared to be the epistles of Christ ministered by us, &c. Such trust, such confident opinion we have through Christ towards God, not that we are competent of ourselves to form any such conclusion as from ourselves, but our competency is from God, who hath qualified us to be ministers of the new covenant." The apostle anticipates his language (1 Cor. ix. 2), "The seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord." He is careful to add that he did not speak from himself, but under the influence of the Spirit of God, who spake by his tongue. It is a singular circumstance that some writers have propounded this as the only meaning of the passage which was consistent with the context, and the responsibility of man, though they have never appealed to the force of *λογισασθαι*, or its general use in the epistles of St. Paul, to justify this interpretation.

The force of John xv. 5, would, I think, be much clearer if we rendered it in closer conformity with the allegorical language which our Lord employs, and explained its meaning to be, "Apart from me, ye are not able to produce any fruit." No Christian can doubt that, in order to partake of the fatness of the vine, we must maintain constant and unsevered union with the root. This is expressed quite as forcibly by the rendering, "Apart from me," as by the "Without me" of the authorised version, and is nearer to the original *χωρὶς ἐμοῦ*. But the chief advantage of the proposed rendering lies in the latter clause, in conformity with the meaning of *ποιεῖν* in Matt. iii. 10, vii. 17, xiii. 23—26; Jas. iii. 12; Rev. xxii. 2, and many other places. It is a fundamental principle of the divine dealings with man, that if "any one is willing to do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine." (John vii. 17.) "To him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God." (Psa. l. 23.) But the language of our authorised version, "Ye can do nothing," conveys a discouraging sound to any who may be seeking after God, if haply they may find him; and strengthens the plea of deceivers and deceived, who say that they cannot walk circumspectly, cannot watch unto prayer, cannot improve the sacred leisure of the Sabbath, or be in the fear of the Lord all the day long.

But if we explain John xv. 5 as inculcating that, "Apart from Christ we can produce no fruit," we allow full scope for the diligence of those who desire to keep judgment and do righteousness (Isa. lvi. 1), while we jealously maintain that

from God alone all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed.

Let us be careful to speak only as Scripture leads us by the hand. Exaggerated statements distress the feeble-minded, and perplex the ignorant, while they destroy the due proportion, and mar the harmony of faith.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

THE DEPARTURE OF THE GOOD.

"The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness."—Isa. lvii. 1, 2.

THIS is the language of a saint, a patriot, and a prophet. It breathes sorrow; it seems to have been written in tears. It is a pathetic lament not only over the grave of departed worth, but also over the indifference of his countrymen to the death of good men. It is a wail for the living as well as for the dead. Who the departed men referred to were, whether some particular persons as Hezekiah, or Josiah, or good men in general, cannot be determined; nor can it be determined whether they died a natural death, or a death of

martyrdom, like those endured under Manasseh, who shed innocent blood till he had "filled Jerusalem from one end to the other." Both the word rendered "perisheth," and the phrase, "taken away," seem to denote that they were removed by a premature and violent death. The *character* of the departed is described with tolerable fullness—"righteous." Men of rectitude, men right in their moral relations, and men right in their principles of action; "*merciful men*"—men of mercy, merciful in their own dispositions, as well as the objects of God's mercy—"walking in his uprightness"—avoiding ever the crooked paths of sin, and pursuing the straight line of goodness. Such is the description of the character of a good man, and it portrays not any particular class of good men, but good.

men everywhere, in every country, clime, and age. The text presents the departure of such men from the world in two aspects :

I. AS GENERALLY DISREGARDED BY THEIR CONTEMPORARIES. "No man layeth it to heart." No one rightly considering it. The language does not necessarily imply that there was not one man properly affected by the death of the good that was taking place, but the vast majority. Many things may account for, though they do not justify the general indifference of men to death. There is the commonness of the event. All die. And there are the absorbing concerns of life. Still an entire indifference to the departure of good men, is an evil to be lamented, as Isaiah now lamented it. First: *It involves a shameful ingratitude.* Who are the greatest benefactors to society? Good men. They are the salt of the earth, and for their sakes the retribution of the wicked is delayed. Their exit from the world is a loss to the Church, the country, and the race. Secondly: *It involves a ruinous folly.* The example of the good is the best means by which men can reach a happy destiny. Hence we are commanded "to follow those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

The text presents the departure of good men from the world—

II. AS A BLESSING TO THEMSELVES. First: *The departed good are delivered from the evils that are coming on the world.* They "are taken away from the evil to come." The world has been full of evils, is still full of evils, and there are terrible evils yet to come. God alone knows the future. The good man by his death escapes the whole. Secondly: *The departed good enter into peace.* "They shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds." His body enters into peace. The grave is a quiet resting-place. "There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest." His body sleeps, sleeps in a bed well guarded, which no noise can disturb, no dreams alarm, from which in the morning it shall rise with a frame invigorated for the activities of eternity. The soul has entered into peace. It is delivered at once from all the internal feelings that agitated it, and all the external circumstances that disturbed it. It enters the kingdom of peace, and commences an endless fellowship with the God of peace. "Let me die the death of the righteous," that my last days may be peace.

CHRIST WASHING THE FEET OF HIS DISCIPLES.

"He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter said unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not, save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all."—John xiii. 4—10.

CHRIST'S *hour was now come*. He was seated down at the Passover with his disciples on the Thursday evening on which He was betrayed. John gives no account of this Passover. He takes for granted that his readers were sufficiently acquainted with it from the writings of the other evangelists. Many wonderful things were felt, said, and done on this ever memorable occasion as recorded elsewhere. The text is a record of some of the things that were acted and uttered on that occasion. Christ appears here as a *dramatical teacher*. He rises

from supper, leaves the table, takes off his mantle, girds Himself with a towel, poureth water into a bason, washes his disciples' feet. All this had a deep meaning. It was dramatic teaching; teaching by symbolic action. The old prophets taught in this dramatic way. Jeremiah's potter's earthen vessel; Ezekiel's scales, knife, and barber's razor, are amongst the numerous examples. The principle of dramatic teaching is right, useful, and divine. There are two great truths here taught by Christ.

I. THAT TRUE GREATNESS CONSISTS IN MINISTERING TO THE GOOD OF INFERIORS. We learn from Luke xxii. 24, that there was on this solemn occasion a dispute among them, the disciples, as to who should be counted greatest. Luke records what Christ *said* in order to give the disciples a true idea of greatness. "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so; but he that is greatest among you let him be as the younger; and he that is chief as he that doth serve." John here records what Christ *did* in order to give the true idea. He condescends to wash the disciples' feet. He shows

that greatness consisted in rendering service to inferiors.

First: *This idea of greatness condemns the general conduct of mankind.* The world regards men as great who receive most service, who mix least with inferiors. He is the great man in the eye of the world who stands most aloof from the common crowd and receives most of their homage and attention.

Secondly: *This idea of greatness agrees with the moral reason of mankind.* The greatness of Christ who made Himself of no reputation, who gave Himself to save the world; and the greatness of Paul, is the greatness which commends itself to the unsophisticated reason of the world. He that humbleth himself to do good gets exalted in the estimation of universal conscience. Disinterestedness is the soul of greatness. The other truth taught by Christ is—

II. THAT SPIRITUAL CLEANSING IS THE GREAT WANT OF THE RACE. When Peter, from a mistaken humility, refused to have his feet washed, Christ said, *"If I wash thee not, I have not part with thee."* *Spiritual cleansing is the great want of man.* This will appear from two facts. (1) Divine fellowship is essential to human happiness.

The true happiness of all spiritual intelligences consists in loving fellowship with their great Father. In his presence there is fulness of joy—nowhere else. (2) Spiritual purity is essential to Divine fellowship. The pure in heart alone shall see the Lord. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Spiritual cleansing then is the great want of the world. Hence the command of God is, "Wash you, make you clean," &c. The prayer of good men is, "Purge me with hyssop, that I may be clean." The text shows two things concerning this spiritual cleansing so essential to the race. First: *It is pre-eminently the work of Christ.* The application of water to his disciples' feet now symbolises the fact that it was his great work to cleanse men of their sins. "If I wash thee not." "I must wash thee; this is my work." This is Christ's work. His blood alone cleanseth from all sin. He receives the praises of eternity for this cleansing work of his. "Unto him who loved us, and washed us," &c. Secondly: *It extends to the whole life of man.* "Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, "He that is washed, needeth not save to wash his feet, but is cleansed

every whit : and ye are clean, but not all." Literally, the words mean this — "Your hands and your head, Peter, have been already washed in the bath." It was customary to take a bath before supper. "You only need now to have the dust that has since gathered to your feet taken off." Spiritually it means "Those who have been truly regenerated, as you have, still need the cleansing of some part of their life: the cleansing of the feet from defilements in the walk of common life." Though a man is regenerated, he is not perfect; every day brings its defilements, and every day requires its purifications. At that table on this occasion there were three types of character:— (1) *The perfectly clean*; this was Christ. (2) *The partially clean*; these were the disciples. The vital parts of their natures had been cleansed, but the extremities, their feet, still required washing. (3) *The entirely unclean*. This was Judas. "Ye are clean, but not all, for he knew who should betray him; therefore, said he, Ye are not all clean."

THE WASHING OF PETER'S FEET.

"Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not,

thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."—John xiii. 8, 9.

THE more general truths contained in this passage have been developed in the preceding sketch. These two verses suggest to us four subjects worthy of meditation.

I. THE MIXTURE OF EVIL IN THE EXPERIENCE OF THE GOOD. Peter, on the whole, was a good man, and his language, "Thou shalt never wash my feet," expresses something that was really good. The feeling that came out on another occasion, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord" (Luke v. 8), implying, the sense of Christ's greatness and his own unworthiness, is expressed here. Just before, as Christ approached him, he exclaims, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" Every word is emphatic. "Thou, Son of the living God! My feet! I, a poor, worthless, sinful man! Thou shalt never wash my feet; I cannot allow it. Thy condescension overwhelms me." This is good. But associated with this there is some amount of evil. There is the want of reflection. His characteristic impulsiveness shows itself. There is the want of ready acquiescence. He ought to have felt such unbounded confidence in

Christ as to submit to his wish without any reluctance, still less without any resistance. Thus, see how evil mixes with the best things within us. This shows—

First: *The necessity for self-scrutiny.* "Who can understand his errors?" Let us search and try our ways. Secondly: *The necessity for divine cleansing.* "Cleanse thou us from secret faults, O God." Thirdly: *The advantages of death.* With the good all imperfections are left this side of Jordan. Yonder is good, and good only—unmixed good. The text suggests—

II. THE DANGER OF A RIGHT FEELING LEADING TO EVIL. The humility of Peter on this occasion was right, but through his want of reflection it led him to oppose Christ. A sense of our own unworthiness and of God's greatness, right in itself, may, and often does, lead to wrong results. First: *Some reject the doctrine of Christ's mediation from this feeling.* So deeply do they profess to feel the worthlessness of human nature and the greatness of God that they refuse to believe that the Maker of the great universe sent his Son into this little planet to die for a world of rebellious worms. Secondly: *Some reject the doctrine of God's personal*

providence from this feeling. There are some who say that God is too great, man too little, to render it credible that He should superintend the affairs of individual men. The great God has only to do with the great. Thirdly: *Some reject Christian consolation from this feeling.* Many devout souls in their suffering refuse to apply to their own use the promises of God from a sense of their own unworthiness. Thus the right feeling, for the lack of intelligent reflection, may lead to evil results. The text suggests—

III. THE RAPIDITY WITH WHICH THE SOUL CAN PASS INTO OPPOSITE SPIRITUAL MOODS. At one moment we hear Peter exclaim, "Thou shall never wash my feet;" and the next, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands, and my head." What a bound! We are all conscious of this power of rapid change—some temperaments more than others; still all have it.

First: *This power indicates the greatness of human nature.* We know of no other creature on earth that can pass through such changes. All irrational creatures move in a rut from which they cannot go. Man has a power to defy time and space, to live in the future, and to revel in

the distant. "I knew a man in Christ fourteen years ago, whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth," &c., &c.

Secondly : *This power shows the necessity for human reflection.* If men reflect not, they will be ever at the mercy of external influences. Thoughtless men of impulse are like feathers on the wind, they are the sport of circumstances. The text suggests—

IV. THE DEPENDENCE OF PERFECTION IN CHARACTER UPON AN INCREASE OF DIVINE KNOWLEDGE. What brought Peter from the wrong to the right mood of soul? New light. After Christ had said "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me," he exclaimed, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." Just before Christ had said to him, "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt hereafter." He was in the dark when he said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." A new light had dawned when he said, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." More light from heaven; more light: this is what we want; let us follow on to know the Lord.

EXISTING IGNORANCE AND APPROACHING KNOWLEDGE.

"What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter."—John xiii. 7.

THE preceding articles sufficiently explain the context, and show the literal meaning of these words. Their special reference was to Peter, and the promise of future knowledge was fulfilled in his own experience. Let us look at the words in a wider application:—

I. THEY INDICATE THE EXISTING IGNORANCE OF THE GOOD. There is much that the best man knows not now. First: *There is much in nature he knows not now.* How little does the most scientific man know of the substances, lives, laws, operations, extent of the universe. How deeply did Sir Isaac Newton feel his ignorance. Secondly: *There is much in moral government he knows not now.* The reason for the introduction of sin, the suffering of innocence, the prosperity of the wicked, the sufferings of the good, the tardy march of Christianity, is wrapt in utmost obscurity. Thirdly: *There is much in Divine revelation he knows not now.* What Peter said of Paul's writings we feel to be true of the whole book. There are many things hard to be understood; there

are discrepancies that we cannot remove, there are doctrines that transcend our intelligence, towering high above our reason as the heavens above the earth. Fourthly: *There is much in his own experience he knows not now.* Why should he be dealt with as he is? Why such alternations of sorrow and joy, friendship and bereavement, health and sickness? Why such conflicting elements in his nature? Thus a thick cloud of darkness covers man's intellectual heavens, narrows his horizon, and renders the things most near at hand almost too obscure, even for a superficial recognition.

II. THEY INDICATE THE APPROACHING KNOWLEDGE OF THE GOOD. "Thou shalt know hereafter." This implies that there is a hereafter for man, and that that hereafter will be a sphere of knowledge. Thou *shalt* know hereafter. First: There will be *sufficient time for knowing.* What ages of study await us! Secondly: *Sufficient facilities for knowing.* All existing obstructions removed, and the immeasurable field of truth wide open under a never clouded and a never setting sun.

LIGHT AND A DARK JOURNEY.

"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts."
—2 Peter i. 19.

I. THE DEGREE OF EVIDENCE THAT COMES WITH THE BIBLE.

"We have more sure, the prophetic word." I take the meaning to be, that the apostle felt that he had better ground for his trust concerning Jesus even than the assurance which the voice on the Mount of Transfiguration afforded. In the times of our doubt we often fancy that if in some devout moment of our life we were only hurried upward to some height of glory, and could but hear the testimony of God to the truths that revelation enshrines, we never could and never would doubt them more. But Peter had heard such a voice, and yet he feels that he had better ground on which to rest, and that better ground is the Book we have, and that is but a *part* of our Scriptures. And Peter was right. For, First: There were but three of them that heard the voice on the mount, and they all heard it together; and so in time they might regard a scene and an occurrence so unusual as nothing more than a day-dream. But the writers of the Bible

are many, and between their prophetic words whole ages often elapsed; and so the possibilities of self-deception, in giving heed unto them, in vast proportions, are lessened. Secondly: The voice on the mount was only of the other day, and was known only to themselves. But the prophetic word has a *history*, and a history in which power is swayed in a manner unrivalled, in which the most wondrous predictions are verified, in which the most marvellous conquests are recorded, and in which the voice of God re-echoes, &c. Thirdly: The voice of God on the mount was whispered to the outward ear only. But the prophetic word awakes the soul's love, devotion, &c.

II. THE DEGREE OF LIGHT WE HAVE FROM THE BIBLE. We are told it is a light shining in a dark place. The original is more specific and suggests "a candle." Here there is a true designation of the Bible, "a candle." Not a sun, you will observe, before which all darkness breaks, and the shadows flee away, and in whose boundless flood of glory all things around, the vaster and the least, are revealed; not a sun, but a candle that gives light indeed, but leaves shadows still. How true! What is there of all that the

Bible casts light on, around which it leaves not shadows? It unveils the great God. But what is the mode of his existence? &c. If we no longer rear our altar to the unknown God, how often must we bend before it, exclaiming: "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour." We gladly take the light it gives us of the future. But where is heaven? And they who have gone before us, do they follow us with watchful eye? Do they ever hear us when we pray? Do they ever gather around us in moments when our memory clings to them? Let us thank God for the thought that Jesus bore our sins. We cannot doubt that we have an atonement, but the philosophy of it? As we watch Jesus dying, and would fathom the relations of that death to sin and God and the universe, the sun of our knowledge is soon eclipsed, and a darkness falls down and wraps the cross round and round.

But the Deity is accomplishing a high and great purpose by leaving us in these shadows. A full revelation might sometimes be for our gratification and comfort, but how often would it be for our hurt? It would beget indolence and

Rectitude exalts a nation. (1.) Exalts it in material wealth. Truth, honesty, integrity in a people are the best guarantees of commercial advancement. Credit is the best capital in the business of a nation as well as in the business of an individual, and credit is built on righteous principles. The more credit a nation has, the more business it can do; and the more business, if rightly conducted, the more will be the accumulation of wealth. (2.) Exalts it in social enjoyments. According as the principles of veracity, uprightness, and honour reign in society, will be the freeness, the heartiness, and the enjoyment of social intercourse. (3.) Exalts it in moral power. The true majesty of a kingdom lies in its moral virtues. The kingdom whose heart beats loyally to the eternal principles of rectitude gains an influence upon the earth mightier than armies. Secondly: *Unrighteousness degrades a nation.* "Sin is a reproach to any people." The prevalence of immorality amongst a people tends, in the very nature of the case, to ignominy and ruin. Neither commerce, nor arms, nor science, nor art can long sustain a morally corrupt people. Immutably Heaven has decreed their ruin. "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build, and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them." (Jer. xviii. 7-10.) The text teaches—

II. THE SOCIAL IMPORTANCE OF MORALITY. "The king's favour is towards a wise servant, but his wrath is against him that causeth shame." The idea is, that the king, the man worthy of the name, will treat his servants according to their character. The king's servants either mean his ministers of state, those who serve him in his regal capacity, or those who attend upon him in his more private and domestic relations. Rectitude in his service will be pleasing to him, and honourable to him in either case. All employers throughout society are the best served by those in their employment whose characters are distinguished by unswerving truth and incorruptible honesty. Few kings, however fallen in character, have so far gone as to feel any real respect for fawning sycophants and unprincipled timeservers. He serves best and is honoured most, whether he is engaged in the interest of a state, a business, or a family whose conduct in all things is controlled by righteousness. This subject teaches, First: *That men who are ruled by righteousness are the men most to be valued in a country.* It is not the warrior, the merchant, or even the man of science and art that are the most valuable to a state. It is the man of goodness. Goodness is to a country what the breeze is to the atmosphere, preventing stagnation and quickening the blood of the world. Secondly: *That the promotion of true morality is the best way to promote the interests of a state.* A healthy press, useful schools, enlightened pulpits, to promote these is to give peace, dignity, and stability to kingdoms.

"What constitutes a state?
Not high-raised battlements, or laboured
mound,
Thick wall or moated gate;

spines and turrets
 toward ports,
 the storm, rich
 courts,
 waits per-
 men."
 WILLIAM JONES.

XXXII.

WORDS.

turneth away wrath;
 stir up anger. The
 useth knowledge
 of fools poureth
 Prov. xv. 1, 2.

ancient or modern,
 without words as
 a man of extensive
 deep thought can
 expressed with the
 words. "Words,"
 "are often every-
 minute hands of the
 important than even
 of action. "Men
 the father of the
 philosophy, "that their
 command over their
 it happens that words
 exercise authority and
 The text leads us to
 things—

PACIFYING AND IRRITATING
 OF WORDS. First:
 power of words. "A
 turneth away wrath."
 things are implied in this
 age. (1) The existence
 against you. There is a
 soul is fired with in-
 speaking to you either
 tongue. Whether that
 has been justly excited by
 not the question now;
 is, in thunder and flame.
 importance of turning
 this anger. It is a very un-
 thing to have indignation
 in an immortal breast
 you; it is not well to be
 and damned by any one, not
 child. (3) There is an

effective method of turning away
 this wrath. That is a "*soft
 answer.*" A response free from
 excitement and resentment, uttered
 in the low tone of magnanimous
 forbearance. At first, in some
 cases, the display of such calmness
 towards an enraged enemy will
 only intensify the passion. But
 when reflection comes, as come it
 must, the soft answer works as oil
 on the waves. A soft answer, like
 a conducting-rod, can carry the
 lightning of an enemy into the
 ground, and bury it in silence.
 Among many examples of the
 pacifying power of soft words,
 the reply of Gideon to the
 exasperated men of Ephraim
 may be given, and also the
 conduct of Abigail to David.
 (1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33.) Secondly:
The irritating power of words.
 "Grievous words stir up anger."
 There is a great tendency in the
 insulting and denunciatory lan-
 guage of your enemy to induce
 you to use grievous words, but the
 use of such words will, instead of
 mending the matter, increase the
 evil, and "stir up anger." They
 only add fuel to the flame. There
 are men whose natures are so un-
 social and splenetic, that their
 words are always of that grievous
 sort that "stir up anger." Where-
 ever they go, they scratch and
 irritate. The curs bark, and even
 the mastiffs are irritated.

II. THE RIGHT AND THE WRONG
 USE OF WORDS. First: *The right
 use of words.* "The tongue of the
 wise useth knowledge aright." A
 similar but not identical senti-
 ment has more than once come
 under our notice in our path
 through this book. (See chaps. xii.
 23, xiii. 16, xiv. 33.) Knowledge
 is good; it is well to have the
 mind richly furnished with useful
 information, but this good thing
 may be, and often is, wrong
 used by words. There is a
 use of knowledge in speech

is to communicate it at right times, to proper persons, in suitable places, and in a becoming spirit. Secondly: *The wrong use of words.* "The mouth of fools poureth out foolishness." "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The fool's heart is full of folly, and folly flows from his lips. Foolish words are either words without meaning, empty jargon, or words of bad meaning, the vehicles of filth, insubordination, and blasphemy. Bishop Horne well remarks that, "Among the sources of those innumerable calamities which from age to age have overwhelmed mankind, may be reckoned as one of the principal, the abuse of words."

(No. CXXXIII.)

GOD'S INSPECTION OF THE WORLD.

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."
—Prov. xv. 3.

The language of the Bible is often very anthropomorphic. It often represents God as having the *bodily* parts of men—hands, feet, head, back, heart, eyes, ears, tongue, &c. It also sometimes represents Him as having the mental passions of men—revenge, jealousy, indignation, hope, disappointment, regret, &c., &c. All this, of course, is an accommodation to our limited faculties and modes of thought. The text is an instance of this feature of divine revelation, it speaks of the "eyes of the Lord." God is a Spirit, an infinite Spirit, and therefore has no parts. The language, however, expresses that which undoubtedly belongs to God, an infinite *capacity of discernment.* God knows at every moment everything, in every place. The Bible is full of this doctrine. (Psa. cxxxix.; Prov. v. 21; Jer. xvi. 17; 2 Chron. xvi. 9.) The

text suggests a few thoughts concerning God's inspection of men.

I. The inspection is **PERSONAL.** He does not inspect men through the eyes of others, but through his own. We often get our knowledge of men from the observation of others. Earthly kings get their knowledge of their subjects thus; but God gets his knowledge of us from Himself. When He comes to judge the world, He will not, like earthly judges, depend for information from the testimony of witnesses. No one will be able to give Him any fresh information. No eloquence will change the judgment that He has formed. He knows all "of Himself."

II. His inspection is **UNIVERSAL.** "His eyes are in every place." There is no place where they are not: on ocean, or on land, in society, and in solitude, in the bustle of business, and in scenes of recreation; wherever we are his eyes are. We cannot go from those eyes, we cannot escape their glance an instant. If we ascend to heaven, they are there; if we plunge into hell, they are there. They penetrate the lowest abysses; they peer into the profoundest darkness.

III. His inspection is **THOROUGH.** "Beholding the evil and the good." There is nothing in the history of man that is not either good or evil. There is no third, no neutral quality. He knows all the good and all the evil. In the most incipient, as well as in the most developed, stages. "There is not a word on our tongue, but, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." This subject urges, First: *Courage for the good.* Ye men of truth and virtue, who struggle here against a mighty odds, take courage under your trials and afflictions. The great Master sees you. His eyes are

on you—take heart. The subject urges. Secondly: *A warning for the wicked.* Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men are fully settled unto evil. Conclude not, O sinner, that thy conduct has escaped the notice of the just God. Judgment is coming. The subject urges, Thirdly: *Circumspection for all.* Since God's eyes are always on us, let us "walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

(No. CXXXIV.)

THE SPEECH OF THE WISE AND THE
SPEECH OF THE FOOLISH.

"A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit. The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doeth not so."—Prov. xv. 4 and 7.

It would seem that Solomon could not say enough about speech; it occurs to him again and again. As he thinks of it, some new point strikes him, and he notes it down. Let us notice what he here says about the speech of the wise and the foolish:—

I. THE SPEECH OF THE WISE.

First: *It is a healing speech.* The wholesome tongue, or, literally, as in the margin, a healing tongue, is a tree of life. There are wounded souls in society; souls wounded by insults, slanders, bereavements, disappointments, losses, moral conviction. There is a speech that is healing to those wounds, and that speech is used by the wise. There are societies, too, that are wounded by divisions, animosities; the social body bleeds. There is a speech which heals social divisions, and the wise employ it. Secondly: *It is a living speech.* "It is a tree of life." It is at once the *product*

and *producer* of life. The speech of the wise is not the vehicle of sapless platitudes, it is the offspring of living conviction. It is a germ falling from the ever-growing tree of living thought, and it *produces* life, too. "Cast forth," says Carlyle, "thy act, thy word, into the everlasting, ever-growing universe: it is a seed-grain that cannot die, unnoticed to-day; it will be found flourishing as a banyan grove—perhaps, alas! as a hemlock forest, after a thousand years." But the word of the wise is not as a hemlock seed; it is a seed that falls from that tree of life, which is to be the healing of the nations. Thirdly: *It is an enlightening speech.* "The lips of the wise disperse knowledge." The words of the wise are beams reflected from the great Sun of Truth, and they break upon the darkness with which error has clouded the world. Solomon was himself an exemplification of this enlightening speech. "He taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The preacher sought to find out acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth." (Eccles. xii. 9, 10.)

II. THE SPEECH OF THE FOOLISH.

First: *The speech of the foolish is a wounding speech.* "Perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit." The unkind slanders, irritating words, of wicked men, have often made a "breach in the spirit" of *individuals, societies, and commonwealths.* Many a female servant in old England will show you by her haggard and desponding looks what breaches have been produced in her spirit by the querulous and ill-tempered words of her mistress even in one short month. There are annoying words that slowly

kill people, and their authors should be denounced as murderers. The poison of asps is on their lips, and their words instil it into the constitutions of men. Secondly: *The speech of the foolish is an empty speech.* "The heart of the foolish doeth not so." The heart is here the antithesis to the lips. The meaning unquestionably is, that the foolish man does not disperse knowledge, but that the wise does. The fool has no knowledge to disperse. He has never sought after knowledge, therefore is ignorant; and, being ignorant, his speech cannot enlighten.

(No. CXXXV.)

DIVERSE FAMILIES.

"A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent. In the house of the righteous is much treasure: but in the revenues of the wicked is trouble."—Prov. xv. 5, 6.

THESE two verses are a domestic sketch. Two families appear before us. In the one there is filial folly; in the other, filial wisdom: in the one, enjoyable riches; in the other, troublesome wealth.

I. THERE IS FILIAL FOLLY AND FILIAL WISDOM. Notice—First: *Filial folly.* "A fool despiseth his father's instruction." A father's instruction is the best kind of instruction. (1.) The instruction of *authority*. A father has a right to instruct his child. The great God expects it of him. "Train up a child in the way he should go," &c. (2.) It is the instruction of *experience*. He seeks to give to his child what he has learnt not merely from books or from other men, but from his own long and tried life. (3.) It is the instruction of *love*. Who feels a deeper interest in his son than he? His counsels are those dictated by the deepest and di-

vinest affections of the human heart. What egregious folly it is for a son to despise such instructions? Despise—not merely neglect, or reject, but to regard it with contempt. A state of mind lost to everything that is true and noble in sentiment. Secondly: *There is filial wisdom.* "He that regardeth reproof is prudent"—wise. It is wise because it is one of the best means (1) to avoid the evils of life. A father's instruction points out the slippery places in the path of life, the rocks ahead on the voyage. (2.) It is the best means to attain the possible good. A father's instruction will point to the direction where the good things lie. He is wise, therefore, to attend to such instructions.

II. THERE IS ENJOYABLE RICHES AND TROUBLESOME WEALTH. First: *There is enjoyable riches.* "In the house of the righteous is much treasure." Whatever is possessed in the house of the righteous, whether children, friends, books, money, is a treasure. A little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked. The righteous man enjoys what he has. His treasures have been righteously won, are righteously held, and righteously used, and in all he has righteous enjoyment. Secondly: *There is troublesome wealth.* "In the revenues of the wicked is trouble." The wealth of the wicked, instead of yielding real happiness engenders anxieties, jealousies, apprehensions, and greatly trouble the spirit. The wicked man often in getting his riches has trouble; he has to go against the dictates of his conscience, and to war with the nobler instincts of his being. In keeping them, too, he has trouble. He holds them with a nervous grasp, fearing lest they should be snatched from his grasp. In leaving them he has

trouble. This wealth gives terror to his dying-bed. "There is a sore evil which I have seen under

the sun, namely, riches kept for the owners thereof, to their hurt."

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

UNUTTERABLE GROANS.

How comes it to pass that groans made in men by God's Spirit cannot be uttered? I find two reasons thereof. First, because these groans are so low and little, so frail, faint, and feeble, so next to nothing, these still-born babes only breathe without crying. Secondly, because so much diversity, yea, contrariety, of passion is crowded within the compass of a groan, they are stayed from being expressive, and the groans become unutterable. How happy is their condition who have God for their interpreter! who not only understand what they do, but what they would say. Daniel could tell the meaning of the dream which Nebuchadnezzar had forgotten. God knows the meaning of those groans which never as yet knew their own meaning, and understands the sense of those sighs which never understood themselves.—*Meditations on all Kinds of Prayer.* THOMAS FULLER.

VARNISH.

Varnish, varnish; if a thing have grown so rotten that it yawns palpably, and is so inexpressibly ugly that the eyes of the very populace discern and detect it, bring out a new pot of varnish, with the requisite supply of putty, and lay it on handsomely. Don't spare varnish; how well it will all look in a few

days if laid on well! Varnish alone is cheap and is safe; avoid carpentering, chiselling, sawing, and hammering on the old quiet house; dryrot is in it, who knows how deep? don't disturb the old beams and junctures: varnish, varnish, if you will be blessed by God and men! This is called the constitutional system, conservative system, and other fine names; and then at last has its fruits—such as we see. Mendacity hanging in the very air we breathe; all men become unconsciously, or half or wholly consciously, *liars* to their own souls and to other men's; grimacing, finessing, periphrasing, in continual hypocrisy of *word*, by way of varnish to continual past, present, future misperformance of *thing*; clearly sincere about nothing whatever, except in silence, about the appetites of their own huge belly, and the readiest method of assuaging these.

THOMAS CARLYLE.

IMPORTANCE OF "DAYS."

Every day is a little life: our whole life is but a day repeated; whence it is that old Jacob numbers his life by days; and Moses desires to be taught this point of holy arithmetic, to number not his years, but his days. Those, therefore, that dare lose a day are dangerously prodigal; those that dare misspend it, desperate.—*Letter to Lord Denny.*

BISHOP HALL.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

WORKING MENS' SOCIAL CLUBS AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTES. By HENRY SOLLY. London: Published by the Working Mens' Club and Institute Union, 150, Strand.

As the account which the author gives of the origin of the institution whose history he writes, refers to ourselves, and is remarkable for its inaccuracies, we give the following extract in order to set the public right on the matter. "In the summer of 1861, the writer when visiting London and conversing with the Rev. David (now Dr.) Thomas, of Brixton, found that gentleman as deeply interested as himself in the subject of suitable places of resort for working-men, and looking precisely in the same direction. Mr. Thomas urging the importance of immediate and *national* action in the matter, proposed the formation of a Limited Liability Company, with a capital of £3,000,000 for building Working Mens' Institutes all over the country. The writer saw with great thankfulness that such an organization, if only it were made a philanthropic society instead of a commercial company, was the very thing required, and Mr. Thomas consenting to the change, they set to work at once to draw up a prospectus, and form the society. The consent of Lord Brougham to become its president was obtained through Serjeant Manning, who, with M. D. Hill, Esq., the Rev. Dr. Guthrie, Canon Robinson, of York, and Mr. Bayly, signed the request to his lordship; and this invaluable support once secured, other eminent men were successfully induced to become vice-presidents." There are no less than four mistakes in this short paragraph. First: It is a mistake that we proposed a "Limited Liability Company with a capital of £3,000,000." Such a notion never entered our thought. We, ourselves, should have branded the man as a brainless fanatic who would have propounded it. Secondly: Mr. Solly represents himself as inducing us to give up our "commercial company," for his philanthropic scheme. The idea of a commercial company, as we have said, was never ours, and the only philanthropic scheme he had, when we first met on the subject, which was in a very casual way, was the formation of some *little local institution*. Thirdly: Mr. Solly represents himself as "setting

to work at once ;" to draw up a prospectus, and form a society. Mr. Solly had nothing whatever to do with the drawing up of the first prospectus. It was drawn up by an episcopal clergyman at our own dictation—a clergyman who knew of our scheme long before we met Mr. Solly. After the prospectus was printed, at our own cost, and Mr. Solly had received a copy, he suggested certain modifications, which we adopted, and upon which the society was afterwards formed. Fourthly : Mr. Solly would suggest that when he met us his plans were identical with our own. There was not the slightest resemblance. He wished to establish a local *institute*, not club at all. There was nothing original in this; local clubs had already been established. Our plan was the formation of a national institution in order to establish working-men's clubs in every part of the kingdom. These are very serious mistakes for a historian to make. We know too much of Mr. Solly to suppose even for a moment that he is capable of intentional misrepresentation. His imagination must be more active than his memory. The following is the true sketch of the origin of the Institution. It was started in order to check intemperance, and to counteract the baneful influence of public houses. We considered public houses were social necessities; working men required them, and our plan was to erect public houses in every part of the kingdom, which should supply the working man with food, literature, recreation, and means for co-operating with his neighbours in efforts to raise himself, and improve his condition. From these public houses, however, we should exclude all alcoholic drinks. We proposed to accomplish this object by raising an annual income of £100,000 a-year, which would be partly lent and partly given to local societies, to help them to establish and to support their own clubs. We believe that had proper efforts been employed, the sum could have been easily raised. Even our own denomination raises nearly this amount every year to convert the heathen. And could not all the sects combined yield an equal sum to help its working population? This, in brief, was our scheme—the scheme we propounded when we first met Mr. Solly—the scheme in whose importance and practicability we still believe—the scheme embodied in the first prospectus, and to which we ourselves obtained the adhesion of the Rev. Dr. Guthrie, Canon Jenkins, Canon Robinson, &c.—the scheme which was discussed at the first meeting at the Law Amendment Society's Rooms, when Lord Brougham presided, and when we were voted into his place, when his engagements compelled him to vacate the chair before the business was concluded. What has become of this grand scheme? Mr. Solly has cut it down to a thing so small, that its income is not sufficient to pay the secretary's salary. We fully believe and heartily hope that men may yet arise who will take the original prospectus up, and work out the national good it contemplated.

THINGS NEW AND OLD; or, a Storehouse of Illustrations. By JOHN SPENCER; with preface by Thomas Fuller. To which is added a Treasury of Similes, by Robert Caudray. Edited, with an introduction, by J. G. Pilkington, M.A. London: Richard Dickinson, 92, Farringdon Street.

BUT few preachers comparatively are blest with an imagination sufficiently strong and active to create such figures as shall strike a truth home to the common hearts of men, and those who are thus gifted are in danger, in this age of iron and rattle, of losing all the poetry of their nature; and yet our own experience, as well as the example of the Heavenly Teacher, who taught in parables, convinces us that suitable figures and metaphors are all-important in the ministry of spiritual truth. This book is in truth a "storehouse of illustrations." Anecdotes, similes, metaphors, allegories, most of a very telling kind, are here in rich variety, each flashing its light upon some great truth. The work is not a mere reprint; it has been carefully edited. The subjects are arranged in alphabetical order, and there are copious and elaborate indices by which reference to the subjects, as well as to the headings, has been provided. The introduction, though short, abounds with useful remarks, is very suggestive and able. Many of the paragraphs that make up this work are amongst the finest productions of genius. They are the offspring of mental royalty, and are truly majestic in their bearing. If rightly used they would carry a truth to souls with a power and grandeur all subduing. Ministers, of course, must have this book, and the sooner they make use of it the better for the congregations of Christendom. We tender to the publisher our grateful acknowledgment for bringing such a work, in such a form, and at such a price, within the reach of the public teachers of religion.

THE SAINT'S HAPPINESS, together with the several Steps Leading Thereunto. Delivered in divers Lectures on the Beatitudes, being part of Christ's Sermon on the Mount, contained in the Fifth of Matthew. By JEREMIAH BURROUGHS. Edinburgh: James Nichol.

"If all the Episcopalians," said Richard Baxter, "had been like Archbishop Usher, and all the Presbyterians like Stephen Martin, and all the Independents like Jeremiah Burroughs, the breaches of the Church would soon have been healed." But little is known of the history of this man. He was born in 1599, studied and took his degree at Emanuel College, Cambridge, after which he became colleague with the Rev. Edmund Calamy, at Bury St. Edmunds. In the year 1631 he became rector of Tibbitshall, in the county of Norfolk, but upon the publication of the articles and injunctions in 1636, he was suspended and deprived of his living. He was chosen one of the

Assembly of Divines, and united with his brethren, the Revs. Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, William Bridge, Sydrach Simpson, in publishing their apologetic narration. He died in the forty-seventh year of his age. He was a man of learning, candour, and modesty, and of an exemplary and irreproachable life. Those who have read his exposition of Hosea will not need us to indicate the character of the present work. This volume contains, besides the work of Jeremiah Burroughs, a work of Nehemiah Rogers, M.A., which is entitled "A Strange Vineyard in Palestina." The work is a fair specimen of the exposition of the doctrinal Puritans. It is clear throughout, and occasionally eloquent.

DÆMONOLOGIA SACRA; or, a Treatise on Satan's Temptations. By RICHARD GILPIN, M.D. Edited with a Memoir. By the Rev. Alexander Balloch Grosart, Liverpool. Edinburgh: James Nichol.

THE memoir of the author, written by Mr. Grosart, is worth the price of the book. It is full of useful information, and abounds with striking remarks and fruitful suggestions. We accept his judgment of the work; it is a remarkable work, by a remarkable man. "It will be found—as an early writer says of another—'*matter-full*,' and nevertheless suggestive rather than exhaustive—that is, you have many rich lodes of the ore of thought opened, but many others indicated, not worked; clear and keen of insight into the deepest places of the deepest things discussed; wide in its out-look, yet concentrated in its in-look; sagacious and wise in its general conclusions, and passionate as compassionate in its warnings, remonstrances, and counsels; full of faith in all 'written' in The Word, and pathetically credulous in accepting testimony when a given fact (alleged) is fitted to back an appeal; curious and quaint in its lore; intense and anxious in its trackings of sin without and within; pre-Raphaelite in the vivid fidelity of its portrayals of Satanic guiles, and guises that are always disguises; and above all, tenderly *experimental* in its consolation to the tried and troubled. The third part is an exposition of the Temptation of our Lord, which may bear comparison for thoroughness and power with any extant."

THE NATIONAL ENCYCLOPÆDIA. A Dictionary of Universal Knowledge. By Writers of Eminence in Literature, Science, and Art. Vols. X. and XI. London: William Mackenzie, 22, Paternoster Row.

WE have frequently called the attention of our readers, in articles somewhat lengthy for us, to this noble work. The two volumes now before us are marked by all the characteristic excellences of previous

volumes. On every subject, and it touches on almost every subject that comes within the range of thought, its articles, though brief, are clear, full, and in many cases exhaustive. The last volume that has appeared (Vol. XI.) brings us down to the word SPECIFIC. We suppose another volume, or two, will complete the undertaking; and, when completed, no work extant will be so accessible as to price, and so valuable as to usefulness to the reading men of England. It will bear comparison with the best encyclopædias in our language. It is, indeed, a Dictionary of Universal Knowledge.

THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE AND REVIEW. Edited by Rev. EDWARD GARBETT, M.A. October Number. London: William Hunt & Co., 23, Holles Street, Cavendish Square.

WE have to apologise to the able editor of this serial for not having sooner noticed the many numbers that have been sent to us. We have only space to say that we heartily hail the advent of the "Christian Advocate," and wish it a long and prosperous life. The articles we have read, we much admire, on account of their vigour of thought, catholicity of spirit, honesty of purpose, and scholarly style. The article in the present number on "Ritualistic Interpretations" has greatly delighted us. Would that our ritualistic bishops and all the lovers of ecclesiastical finery and attitudinations would study it.

MEDITATIONS ON SCRIPTURAL SUBJECTS. By Rev. HENRY CRESSWELL. London: John Snow & Co., 2, Ivy Lane, Paternoster Row.

THIS little work is left to tell its own tale. It has neither preface nor introduction. He who presents us with a rose need give us no prefatory description of its structure, its hues, or its fragrance. The gem of flowers carries its introduction with it. It is thus with such a work as this. Although rich in thought, it is not a book for the intellect, and, therefore, not for criticism. It is for the heart, and feeling must be the interpreter and the judge. It is the wine that strengthens man's heart, the fragrance that floats about Paradise.



A H O M I L Y

ON

Noah: "Things not seen as yet."

"By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith."—Hebrews xi. 7.

N OAH was the son of that second Lamech, who was the tenth in descent from Adam. His father was a devout man, and his heart was heavy and sad on account of the curse that seemed to rest upon the earth. The birth of his son, which took place six hundred years before the deluge, broke as a cheering ray upon the dark and troubled atmosphere of his spirit. He called his name Noah, which signifies *rest*, saying, "This shall comfort us for our work and labour of our hands because of the ground which Jehovah hath cursed." After this joyous event in the home of Lamech, five hundred long years roll away before we hear anything of Noah himself, and then all that is said of him is that he "begat three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth." We are authorized, however, to infer that, during the whole of these five centuries, his conduct realized the high hopes of his father on the day of his birth, for we are told that "Noah found favour in the eyes of the

Lord," that he was "a just man and perfect in his generations," and that "he walked with God." By the command of the God of heaven, and under the directions of infinite wisdom, he built an ark by which himself and family escaped the universal ruin of that terrible deluge which destroyed the world, and which was revealed to him one hundred and twenty years before it came. But my purpose at present is not to sketch his biography, or to indicate the leading features of his character, but to use the language which Paul employs concerning him in the text, in order to set before you some of those things awaiting man which are "*not seen as yet*," things that are still wrapped in the sable folds of the awful future. Looked at in this aspect the text suggests three great general truths—

I. THAT THE THINGS "NOT SEEN AS YET" ARE THE GREATEST THINGS IN HUMAN HISTORY. What are the *things* which Noah had "not seen as yet," the "things" which lay beyond the view of the old patriarch, away amidst those infinite invisibilities yet to be revealed? They were undoubtedly the deluge, and the only means of escape—the deluge with all its terrific phenomena and appalling consequences. The "breaking up of the fountains of the great deep"—the opening of "the windows of heaven"—the dying struggles of a drowning world—the success of the ark to be built, in battling with the fury of the elements and outriding the tempest—these were some of the *things* which were to him at one time "not seen as yet." How great were those things! Great to Noah, great to his contemporaries, great to the race, great to the universe. It may, I think, be affirmed, as a general truth, that the *things* for mankind which are "not as yet seen," are the *greatest* things in their history. Some men even in this short life have experienced truly wonderful things; their histories have been most eventful and well nigh marvellous; their biographies have surpassed the creations of romance. Albeit, what they have seen will scarcely stand comparison with the things that are coming to them, but which

are "not seen as yet." Death—introduction into a world of spirits—conscious contact with the Judge of quick and dead at the final bar of destiny—resurrection from the sleep of centuries—all the events of individual life, not merely through an age or a millennium, but through interminable cycles; all these things are "not seen as yet," but they await every one of us. They are in the march of coming events, and they will break in upon our horizon in due time. He who controls human affairs has appointed the very hour of their advent; and, like the laws of nature and the stars of heaven, they will keep their time. When destiny strikes their hour, they will be with us. The fact that the *greatest* things in our history are "not seen as yet" should impress us—

First: *With the greatness of human nature.* There is a sense in which it is impossible for man to "think too much of himself." He is, as compared with all mundane life, a great being. Man, reverence thy nature. Thou art not like the beasts of the field nor the birds of heaven, made only for this little planet, here to be controlled only by the *palpable* for a short period, and then to be as if thou hadst never been. Thou art structured to see the *invisible*, to witness the eternally revealing, to mingle with immortals, and to revel in the infinite. The fact that the greatest things in our history are "not seen as yet" should impress us—

Secondly: *With the solemnity of human life.* Those, and they are, alas! the great majority of the race, who treat life with *frivolity*, outrage all the dictates of sound reason. Whilst the antediluvians were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, and laughing life away, there were all the horrors of the deluge, "as things not seen as yet," hanging over them like a brooding tempest about to break in thunder. They did not see it, but there it was. Was not their frivolity, under such circumstances, *hideous* in folly as well as monstrous in wickedness? And yet in the lives of us all on this earth there are things "not seen as yet" hanging over us, not less tremendous than that deluge. Sad it is that much of the periodical literature of England is a ministry

to the risible, the vain, and the frivolous in man. Men of genius and of culture trade in efforts to turn life into a joke and set the world to laughter. In view of "the things not seen as yet" hanging over us, the grin thus awakened is the ghastly grin of the maniac. Frivolous merriment is folly, dignified cheerfulness is wisdom.

II. That some of those things "not seen as yet," are DIVINELY REVEALED TO MAN AS ARTICLES OF FAITH. The deluge—the construction of the ark, the safety of himself and family were "things not seen," which God revealed to Noah. Here is the revelation:—"And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them: and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher-wood: rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it. And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die. But with thee will I establish my covenant: and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee." What the Almighty did in this respect to Noah, He does towards all men who are put in possession of his holy word. He reveals to them some of the "things not seen as yet." Here, for example, in this Book He has revealed the *universal triumph of the Gospel in the world*. We are directed to a period when knowledge shall be universal, when brother need not say to brother, "Know the Lord," for "All shall know him from the least even unto the greatest." When *goodness* shall be *universal*, when "righteousness and

praise," morality and religion "shall spring forth before all nations." When *peace* shall be *universal* and "nations break their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, and shall learn war no more." When "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ, and He shall reign for ever." A glorious glimpse is this of "things not seen as yet." Here, again, is revealed the *termination of that mediatorial system of things under which the human race has been living ever since the fall*:—"Then cometh the end, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father, when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority, and power." When this is done, all connected with the present probationary and restorative system will be over, the last man born, the last sermon preached, the last Bible printed, the last soul saved. A solemn glimpse is this, of the "things not seen as yet." Here, again, is revealed the *final advent of the Judge*:—"Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him. And they also which pierced him, and all the kings of the earth shall wail because of him." "Hereafter, shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power and coming in the clouds of heaven." "The Lord himself shall descend from Heaven, with a shout and with the voice of the Archangel, and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first." An awful glimpse is this, of "things not seen as yet." Here, again, is revealed the *resurrection of the dead*:—"All that are in their graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed; for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." A wonderful glimpse is this, of "things not seen as yet." Here, again, is revealed the *separation of the righteous from the wicked*. "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.

And before him shall be gathered all nations : and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats : And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. And the wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." A truly affecting glimpse is this, of " things not seen as yet." Thus God has revealed some of the unseen things that await us, in order that we may *believe* in them. Do we believe ? Whether we believe or not, they are realities, they are *things* in the plan of God, they are events rolling up " the steeps of time," they are approaching us, and though hid from our vision in the abysses of the distant future, they are on their march, and will as truly break on our vision as to-morrow's sun will break upon the world. As Noah believed in an unseen deluge, and prepared for the catastrophe, so let us believe in those " things not seen as yet," and act in harmony with the faith.

III. That man's faith in those things " not seen as yet," is CAPABLE OF EXERTING A MIGHTY INFLUENCE UPON HIS LIFE. Noah believed in the unseen deluge which the Almighty revealed to him, and, " being moved with fear, he prepared an ark to the saving of his house," &c.

First: *His faith in the unseen impelled him to the most trying work*—" Being moved with fear," which Ebrard renders, " *with wise foresight*," he set himself to the construction of an ark according to the directions which the Almighty had given him. And his work was truly trying—trying to his *patience*. There is a tendency in most men to get tired of the same work ; change of labour we feel to be rest. But here is a man who labours on day after day, month after month, year after year, for *one hundred and twenty years*. Was not this *trying* to his patience ? It was trying also to his *social nature*. All men in labour desire the sympathy and co-operation of their fellow-men. To work alone single-handedly without sympathy, is never pleasant. But Noah had to detach himself from the men of his age, and not only

sacrifice their sympathy, but incur their scorn and opposition. He exposed himself to their bitter insults, their withering lampoons, and malignant contempt. It was *trying*, moreover, to his *reason*. His own experience, and that of his ancestors, assured him of the *stability* of nature. Year after year up to the last of the one hundred and twenty, as nature proceeded in her wonted course, moving on in the majesty of unbroken order, she would seem to him at times to denounce him as one of the most deluded of visionaries. The sceptics of his age would no doubt avail themselves of the indisputable regularity of nature, and point him out to society as one of the most brainless of fanatics ; still, his *faith* in the "things not seen as yet," as revealed by God, made him strong to labour on. And what did the result show ? That it is far wiser to trust in the word of God than in the stability of nature, or the deductions of reason. God *can* break the order of nature ; He *cannot* break his word. God *has* broken the order of nature, as man understands it ; He has *never* broken his word. Oh, it is faith in the unseen that makes men strong "to labour and to wait." This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. The heroic achievements emblazoned in this chapter are all attributable to this faith. Let me believe in those things "not seen as yet," which God has revealed, and I shall be magnanimous in suffering, invincible in duty, brave in danger, discharging evermore my mission heroically, regardless alike of the smiles or frowns of men.

Secondly : *Noah's faith in the unseen impelled him to the most serviceable work.* The ark he made proved the "saving of his house," as well as the saving of the germs of a new world. Had he not done his work, would not the human race have become extinct ? A truly serviceable work was this work of Noah. He became the second father of mankind ; and, under God, we owe him our existence and our earthly all. What made him such a benefactor ? Faith in the "things not seen as yet," which God revealed. In making that ark, he worked out God's idea : "According to all that

God commanded him, so did he." And in thus working out God's idea, he saved the world. Thus it ever is. No man can truly help his race unless he believes in God's word, and works his faith out on the little and, it may be, very humble and dusty platform of his earthly life. Wouldst thou be a true benefactor, brother ? Then, like Noah, take into thy being ideas from God about "things not seen as yet" ; let these fill and fire thee, work thy faculties, and shape thy character. Man's mission is to get ideas from heaven into him, and plant them as living seeds in the earth.

Thirdly : *Noah's faith in the unseen compelled him to sin-condemning work.* "He condemned the world" by practically trusting the Divine word, obeying the Divine command, working out in every-day life the ideas of God. He condemned the unbelief, corruption, and impieties of the wicked millions about him, that revelled in these crimes. Thus he was, as Peter calls him, a "preacher of righteousness." He preached righteousness not merely with the lip, but with the whole life. Every stroke of the hammer that echoed in the valley was a homily against sin. He was a light "shining in a dark place." "This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world." The excellence of one individual exposes the faults of another, as I have sometimes seen a light beaming out from one region of the sky giving a blacker and more threatening aspect to a dark thunder-cloud hanging in the opposite heavens.

Fourthly : *Noah's faith impelled him to a self-rectifying work.* "He became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." The meaning is, he became a possessor of righteousness. His faith in the "things not seen as yet," which included the intervention of Christ, made him right with God, for it is said, "he found favour in the sight of the Lord." Right in the very spirit of his life, for we are told that "Noah walked with God." Men are ever "justified"—made right by faith.

CONCLUSION : There are three classes of men in relation to this subject. (1.) There are those who are *careless* about the

"things not seen as yet." They live *in* the flesh, *to* the flesh, and *for* the flesh ; are immersed in materialism, and are as utterly indifferent to the unseen things that are marching towards them as the contemporaries of Noah were to the deluge. Death, retribution, God, eternity, these are words to which they close their ears ; these are realities that exert no influence on their lives. How foolish their conduct, how perilous their position ! They are like men sporting on the flowery brow of a volcanic hill that will soon rive asunder and engulph them in its fires. (2.) There are those who are *sentimentally* interested in the things "not seen as yet." With thousands it is to be feared who call themselves Christians, those invisible realities are but subjects that merely ripple the surface of their nature—subjects for passing thought and occasional speech. They do not stir the depths of their soul, they take no hold upon the life, they exert no dominant force. (3.) There are those who are practically influenced in the "things not seen as yet." They feel themselves under the power of the world to come. They look away from the things that are "seen and temporal" upon those things that are "unseen and eternal." Though in the world, they are not of the world. Like Noah, they have received ideas from heaven, and they consecrate their existence to the working of them out. Brother, to which of these classes dost thou belong ? Art thou careless ? Then with the awful responsibility of man resting on thee thou art living the life of a brute. Or belondest thou to the second ? A sentimental interest in those things availeth thee nothing ; it only enhances thy responsibility and darkens thy future. Or to the third ? If thou art relying on the Word of God and working out his will, thou art prepared for all the "things not seen as yet." Thou hast not, like Noah, to prepare an ark. An Ark has been prepared for thee, thy family, and the world. Enter it, and it shall shelter thee from storms "not seen as yet," bear thee triumphantly over the fiery floods of universal retribution, and land thee on the sunny hills of everlasting rest.

A Homiletic Glance at the Acts of the Apostles.

Able expositions of the ACTS OF THE APOSTLES, describing the manners, customs, and localities described by the inspired writers; also interpreting their words, and harmonising their formal discrepancies, are, happily, not wanting amongst us. But the eduction of their widest truths and highest suggestions is still a felt desideratum. To some attempt at the work we devote these pages. We gratefully avail ourselves of all exegetical helps within our reach; but to occupy our limited space with any lengthened archæological, geographical, or philological remarks, would be to miss our aim; which is not to make bare the mechanical process of the study of Scripture, but to reveal its spiritual results.

SUBJECT: *Paul at Malta—Good in Heathendom.*

“And when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita. And the barbarous people shewed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold. And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly; but, after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god. In the same quarters were possessions of the chief man of the island, whose name was Publius; who received us, and lodged us three days courteously.”—Acts xxviii. 1—7.

WE have followed Paul in his journey to Rome through the terrific voyage “up and down Adria” until the vessel was dashed to pieces on the shores of Melita. He, with the two hundred, threescore and fifteen souls, who had shared with him the terrors and sufferings of that voyage, have “escaped all safe to land.” We are told that when “they were escaped, they knew that the island was called Melita.” That this island is our modern Malta, is a point on which most of our acknowledged expositors are agreed. The

place known as "the bay of St. Paul" on the north-east coast of Malta, which tradition assigns as the scene of shipwreck, presents all the features mentioned in this narrative. It is described as a "rocky shore, with creeks or inlets, a place of two seas both in the sense of a narrow channel, and of a projecting point. It is a tenacious anchorage—beds of mud contiguous to banks of sand and clay. It has soundings exactly answering to those recorded, and in the same relative position, and in precisely such a coast as to shape, height, breakers, and currents, as would account for a shipwreck taking place just here." The people who inhabited this island at that time are here called "barbarous" people, so named in order to distinguish them from Greeks and Romans, who regarded all nations as barbarians who did not speak their language. "Its population was of Phœnicean origin, speaking a language which, as regards social intercourse, had the same relation to Latin and Greek which modern Maltese has to English and Latin." The character of the islanders is very strikingly revealed in the verses before us, and that character shows us the *good* that there is in the human heart where there is neither civilization nor Christianity. It is common to regard all men outside of Christendom as utterly destitute of every element of goodness. Their kingdom of darkness is unrelieved by a single ray of *goodness*. They are the incarnations and instruments of evil, and evil only. This is untrue to fact, and a libel on human nature. Observe in these barbarians several good things.

I. A SYMPATHY WITH HUMAN SUFFERING. "And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness, for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold." And then in the seventh verse we are told, "that the chief man in the island, whose name was Publius, received and lodged us three days courteously." The appearance of these shipwrecked men, destitute of food and raiment, shivering in the cold and the rain, stirred their hearts with commiseration, and they showed them no *little*

kindness. They kindled a fire to warm their shivering frames, and no doubt prepared food to allay their hunger, and to recruit their exhausted natures. This *social love* dwells in men of every colour, and every clime. It pulsates in all hearts. How can this be maintained, it may be said, in the presence of the fact that cannibalism and human sacrifices, and bloody wars, and nameless cruelties, prevail amongst many barbaric and heathen tribes? My reply is (1), that these cruelties are perversions of this very social sympathy. (2.) That the very existence of tribes implies it; men could not exist at all in unity without this social and kindly affection. (3.) That cruelties in the forms of oppression, murders, and wars, exist even in Christendom, where this goodness is patent to all. That this kindly sympathy does, as a rule, exist in all hearts, however deeply sunk in ignorance and depravity, is proved—

First: *By modern travellers.* Livingstone found it in those dark regions of South Africa which had never been visited by a European until he appeared. Everywhere he found hearts that could be touched with sympathy by the sight of suffering. It is proved also—

Secondly: *By the Bible.* The Bible is a revelation of love, and unless men have the element of love in them, they would be as incapable of understanding its meaning or feeling its power as the ravenous beast that prowls in the forest. What meaning, for example, would there be to a man who had no love in him in the tale of the Prodigal Son, in the story of Jesus and the family at Bethany, and in the other sketches of love that make up the Gospel history? Of what service, moreover, would it be to give a history of Christ's sufferings, to depict Him in agony on the Cross, if humanity had no heart to be touched with sympathy at the sight of suffering? In fact, if the Bible is a book to be understood and felt by man the world over, man everywhere must have in him the element of love. You may as well bring the magnet to clay as take the Gospel to men who have no love in them. Observe in these barbarians—

II. A SENSE OF RETRIBUTIVE PROVIDENCE. "And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live." Here is a fine subject for a picture. Artistic genius may get for itself immortal fame by transferring this scene with rigorous faithfulness to canvas. The great apostle gathering sticks and kindling a fire, a viper which lay at first torpid in the cold faggots springing into venomous activity and striking at the hand of Paul as the fire began to kindle. The barbaric Maltese looking on with horror and disappointment, feeling for the moment that the man towards whom they had shown "no little kindness" was a murderer whom "vengeance suffereth not to live." That viper seemed to them for the moment, Nemesis, the goddess of vindictive justice, avenging the cause of the innocent and inflicting punishment upon the guilty. This sense of the connection between crime and punishment is so universal that it must be regarded as *instinctive*. It is a feeling that underlies all religions and runs through all societies, barbaric as well as civilized. This sense led these people to associate murder with crime, and crime with suffering; so far they were correct, they were true in their theology. It is true that they made mistakes concerning retribution, but their mistakes have ever been too prevalent, even in circles professedly Christian. Their mistakes were—

First: *That punishment for crime came in a material form.* The sting of the viper they thought the punishment. It was a mere natural occurrence, this spring of the venomous reptile to Paul's hand. They thought it punishment. Men have ever thought punishment comes thus. The fall of the tower of Siloam was a natural occurrence, but some of the people of that day thought that it was a judgment upon those whom it destroyed. A crowded theatre is on fire, its tenants are destroyed in the conflagration; men say it is

retribution to the votaries of theatrical amusements. Thus, men now often regard some terrible occurrence in nature, as the Avenger punishing crimes. Whereas, the fact is, that nature in her operations pays no attention to moral distinctions; her storms shall shipwreck a Paul, as well as a Nero. Vipers will sting apostles as well as apostates; providence will pamper a Dives and starve a Lazarus. The other mistake which they made respecting retribution was—

Secondly : *That it followed flagrant crimes only.* “This man is a murderer,” a tremendous criminal—and therefore, he is punished. Men have the same idea now. Murder they think the greatest of crimes, and deserving the greatest punishment. But there is a spirit which often possesses men, that calls for greater punishment, even, than a material murder. “The truth is,” says Frederick Robertson, in a masterly discourse on this subject, “we think much of crime, little of sin. There is many a murderer executed whose heart is pure, and whose life is white compared with those of many a man who lives a respectable, and even honoured life. David was a murderer. The Pharisees had committed no crime: but their heart was rotten at the core. There was in it the sin which has no forgiveness. It is not a Christian, but barbarian estimate, which ranks crime above sin, and takes murder for the chief of sins, marked out for Heaven’s vengeance.” Observe in these barbarians—

III. A FEELING OF A SUPREME BEING. “And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god.” The rapidity with which these men changed their opinion concerning Paul—passing from the notion that he was a flagrant criminal to the belief that he was a god, is only an example of that instability and fickleness of soul which ever characterise the uncultured and the untaught. All souls who are not “rooted and grounded” in the

true faith are as "unstable as water." The point, however, which is most noteworthy here is, that that which brought up to them the idea of God, was that which they considered the *marvellous*. They knew that the natural tendency of the viper's sting was to produce a swelling wound, if not instant death. Because in Paul's case it did not do so, they thought him "a god." They had the feeling that the laws of nature could only be counteracted by God Himself. It was in the *wonderful*, not in the *good*, that they saw God. Thus men generally feel. The idea of God comes up to them most powerfully, not in the calm goodness that is present in every part of the universe, but in strange and startling occurrences. The good in them, however, was the natural *feeling* they had of a god, not their *conception* of Him. The feeling of God in the human soul is God's own implantation, and is good; the conception formed from it is man's, and may be good or evil. It is in every soul, this feeling. Livingstone says, "That the existence of a God, and of a future state, has always been admitted by all the Bechuanas. Everything that cannot be accounted for by common causes is ascribed to the Deity, as creation, sudden death, &c. 'How curiously God made these things!' 'He was not killed by disease, he was killed by God,' are common expressions. And when speaking of the departed they say: 'He is gone to the gods!'" The Brahmins profess that nothing which appears sin to us ever appeared otherwise to them.

These three things, then, *sympathy with human suffering—a sense of retribution—and a feeling for a divine being*—constitute what I call *good* in heathens. Changeful, dark, and tempestuous as are the heavens of men with corruption and crime, these three things, like settled, calm, and bright stars, break ever through the gloom.

CONCLUSION: Several things may be fairly deduced from this subject.

First: The identity in authorship of human souls and divine revelation. The grand rudimental subjects of the Bible are love, retribution, God; and these, as we have seen,

are written in ineffaceable characters on the tables of the human heart everywhere. What Christ put into his book He put first into the human soul, and thus He is "the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

Secondly : The impossibility of atheism ever being established in the world. Systems that are inconsistent with the intuitions of the human soul can never stand. They may be fabrics most logical in structure, gorgeous in aspect, but they are on the sand and must fall. The human soul is essentially theistic and religious.

Thirdly : The responsibility of man wherever he is found. The heathens with this inner light of goodness are bound to walk according to their light. "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead ; so that they are without excuse."

Fourthly : The duty of missionaries in propagating the Gospel. Let those who go forth to the heathens not ignore the good in the human heart on all shores and under all suns, but let them *recognise it, honour it, appeal to it, develop it.*



"The Bible contains only a record of the Divine dealings with a single nation ; his proceedings with the minds of other people are no recorded. That large other world—no less God's world than Israel was, though in their bigotry the Jews thought Jehovah was their own exclusive property—scarcely is, scarcely could be named on the page of Scripture except in its external relation to Israel. But at times, figures, as it were, cross the rim of Judaism, when brought in contact with it, and passing for a moment as dim shadows, do yet tell us hints of a communication and a revelation going on unsuspected. Job, Naaman, Nebuchadnezzar, Hahab, the Syro-Phœnician woman, are examples. They had the light "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."—T. W. ROBERTSON.

Homiletic Notes on the Epistle of James.

(No. XIII.)

SUBJECT: *The False and the True Wisdom.*

"Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."—James iii. 13—18.

EVERY rational man thinks he is pursuing, in whatever he does, a wise course; that his theories, schemes, maxims, are wise; and so, according to his notion of wisdom, he moves in his profession, merchandize, craft, or religion. We may say generally that there are two lights, two wisdoms, by one or the other of which all men are guided—only one of these is really wisdom, but in accommodation to current language we will call the other also wisdom. So that we are led to look at *the false and the true wisdom*. There are at least two *resemblances* between these two. (1) *Both reveal the character*, and (2) *Both are guides in life*. But the text has chiefly to do with the *contrasts* between them, and it certainly marks most striking and distinguishing points of difference.

I. THEY CONTRAST IN THEIR ORIGIN. *The true "descends from above," the false does not.* How does true wisdom descend to man "from above?" First: *In a written revelation*. The Bible is the book of wisdom. In it wisdom is uttered in precepts and example. Secondly: *In a divine life*. The wisdom personified in Proverbs (viii.) was incarnated

in Christ. He is the Logos. He is the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. In Him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom." He is "the wisdom of God." Thirdly: *In the impressions of the Divine Spirit.* There is a Spirit who takes of the things of Christ and reveals them to men. To man "is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom."

The *false* wisdom on the other hand has its origin in the corrupt. The factors of this wisdom are the "earthly, the sensual, the devilish." Material interests, carnal excitements, and Satanic inspiration beget, and nurture the notions of all sinful policy, and all sceptical philosophies in the false wisdom of the world. They kindle this *ignis fatuus* in the drear and marshy regions of the depraved soul. In this deceptive light, many are walking hell-ward.

II. THEY CONTRAST IN THEIR NATURE. There are several expressions used here by James indicating the contrast between the true and the false wisdom. As belonging to the *true* wisdom, there is (1) "*meekness*"—*πραυτης*—mildness as opposed to harshness. True meekness, as it was seen in Moses, whom Scripture ranks among the meekest of our kind, implies a loving nature under self-control. It implies much endurance. It is an invulnerable attribute of character, the all-conquering and unconquerable. (2) There is *purity*. "The words *πρωτον μὲν ἀγνή* indicate that the especial characteristic by which it is distinguishable from all false show of wisdom is this internal attribute." (Webster.) It is incorruptible in its very essence. "*First pure,*" for where this purity is there will be the peaceable and the gentle, and the easy to be entreated, and all else that the apostle portrays. Purity as a root will have many branches.

As belonging to the *false* wisdom, there is "*bitter envying and strife.*" The word *ἐπίθειαν* meaning party spirit, indicates that rivalry which is the twin sin of envy. Envy is one of the foulest of human passions. It implies ill-nature, a sense of inferiority, and a desire to injure. Where this is there must

"be strife, confusion, and every evil work." There is, therefore, nothing in common between the attributes of the true and of the false wisdom. They are as unlike as day and night.

III. THEY CONTRAST IN THEIR EFFECTS. The *true is personally pleasing, the false personally painful*. The peaceful, the merciful, the gentle, are all elements of blessedness. "The fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." "Peacemakers partake of the fruits of the harvest while they are sowing the seed." And so in all the elements there are the joys of the Beatitudes. On the contrary, envying and strifes, and falsehoods, are all associated with pain. They wrong a man's own soul.

The *true is socially beneficial, the false is socially injurious*. Where the first is there are good fruits, "without partiality and without hypocrisy." To *be* good is to *do* good. The being is essential to the doing. Where the other is, there is "confusion and every evil work." Thus the one leads to Cosmos, the other to Chaos.

Bristol.

U. R. THOMAS.

Germs of Thought.

SUBJECT: *Spiritual Illumination.*

"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."—Psa. cxix. 18.

Analysis of Homily the Seven Hundred and Seventieth.

BELIEVERS in all ages and under every dispensation have great regard for the Bible. They admire and appreciate it more than earthly riches. David said, "That it is more to be desired than gold, sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." The Bible is full of moral truth, fitted for

the affections and conscience. It is the power of God. It is a book for the world. Believers feel deep interest in the Bible, *for it contains their Father's will.* It is there that God speaks in the Bible, revealing Himself to man in a special manner. God's will is revealed in the natural world in actions. In the Bible God's will is revealed in letters, syllables, and words. It contains God's mode of dealing with his children. In the Bible He has revealed Himself a Father to the penitent. *It contains also their rule of practice.* The Bible gives us a complete system of practical religion. Man requires a rule, a guide, that he may know and fulfil his duties towards God and man. The Bible is to the Christian as light to the traveller. It is a lamp to his feet, and a light unto his paths. It is a book by which to live and die. It is a law to the Christian, and his prayer to God is that he would remove his moral blindness, that he may see the things that are in his holy and perfect law. We notice—

I. THAT MAN BY NATURE IS SPIRITUALLY BLIND. "Open thou mine eyes."

(1.) *This spiritual blindness is the effect of sin.* Sin's entrance into our world has effected great change in man. It has brought man under its dominion. It affected every power of the soul. Sin could not destroy the powers of the soul. Man in his present state and condition possesses all the powers and instincts which he had in his state of innocency. He possesses at present a power to love, to hope, to hate, to remember, to distinguish between the rightness and wrongness of his actions, and a power to perceive. Yet these powers of the soul have been injured by sin. Sin has turned every power of the soul to a wrong direction. And David prays for a removal of this darkness that covers his perceiving power. He does not pray for a power to perceive the wondrous things that are in his law. He feels that he has power, and that that power is under the effect of sin. He prays God that his eyes should be opened; that the power of perceiving should be repaired; that the darkness may be

removed. Physical blindness is a misfortune to be pitied, but moral blindness is a crime ; the effect of sin, and as such to be condemned.

Secondly : *This spiritual blindness is universal.* This moral blindness is not an effect that has been felt by some persons, in some periods, and in some parts of the world. It is universal ; sin produced an universal influence. Every man's heart by nature is defiled ; every man's conscience is marked with guilt, and every man's thinking and perceiving powers are under the influence of sin. The fall in Eden has effected *humanity*. The universality of suffering shows that the effect of sin is universal. The universality of the desire to be reconciled to God, is a proof that it has affected every man, and the universality of death as the wages of sin is a proof that its influence is universal, and the Bible tells us, "That darkness covers the earth, and gross darkness the people."

Thirdly : *This spiritual blindness deprives man of his prerogatives.* Physical blindness deprives man of the glory of God's works in creation. It shuts out all that is grand, beautiful, and bright in this glorious universe. But moral blindness shuts out greater glories from man's vision. The moral is of more importance than the physical. To the blind there is no beauty in the sun, which is the centre of worlds, and which gives light throughout the creation. He is unable to value the preciousness of the moon, which giveth light when the shades of evening have overcome the traveller. He seeth not the brightness of the firmament when filled with stars. The beauty of nature is hid from him in darkness. He sees not the glory of the flowers that cover the wide field of nature. He is in darkness ; to him all is dark. He feels his condition to be one of great misfortune. But the man that is spiritually blind is deprived of the glory of the spiritual things. He seeth no beauty in the Sun of Righteousness, in the Star of Bethlehem, in the Rose of Sharon, and in the Lily of the Valley. The glory and beauty of the eternal things are not seen by him. He is in darkness. He was created to behold the glory of God and to enjoy himself

in viewing God's ineffable glory. Oh ! what blindness so miserable as moral blindness ?

Fourthly : *This spiritual blindness exposes man to danger.* The blind is always in danger. He is not aware of the perils which surround him. People take advantage of and often deceive and lead the blind to perils. The blind very often will walk right into danger. He is destitute of power to defend himself. A man that is physically blind may die of hunger when bread is within his reach, and perish of thirst by the side of the well which invites his lips to drink, and be lost when he may be saved. The sinner is exposed to greater dangers. The bread of life is near him, but it avails him nothing. The water of life which runs from under the throne of God is near him, but he is perishing ; mercy and forgiveness are at hand, but he sees not the want of them. The refuge is before him, but 'he travels the path that leads to ruin. Who so blind as the sinner ?

II. THAT THE REMOVAL OF THIS SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS WILL ENABLE MAN TO PERCEIVE THE TRUTH OF GOD'S LAW.

“ Open thou mine eyes that I may behold,” that I may have a clear vision of the things of the Bible. When this spiritual blindness is removed, man is brought into a new sphere and new world. When the physical blindness is removed, all around and within him is new. He admires the handy work of his Creator, and with great amazement and overflowing joy he gazes on creation, from the sun which illuminates worlds, to the smallest atom that composes and balances the earth. When the sinner's eyes are opened he sees God's goodness, patience, and mercy in sparing his life, and he beholds the wondrous things of God's book. Before its removal he could see no beauty, no glory, and no wondrous things in the Bible, but now he sees that the Bible is the greatest revelation that God has given to man. This teaches us—

First : *That the Bible is replete with realities.* “ That I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” There are

things in the Bible. From beginning to end it contains sublime truths. Many deny the fact; when they read the Bible, they say they see no *realities*, no *things* in the law; but it is useless; it is useless for the blind man to say that there is no light in the sun, no glory in the moon, no beauty in the stars, and no loveliness in the fair face of nature, because he is unable to see the light of the sun, the glory of the moon, the beauty of the stars, and the loveliness that is seen in creation; so it is useless for the sinner to say that the Bible is void of reality. The Christian perceives the truths that are in the Bible. His eyes are opened, and now he beholds wondrous things in the law of the Lord.

Secondly: *That the realities of the Bible are wonderful.* "Wondrous things out of thy law." There are *things* full of wonder in creation, in providence, but the things of the Bible are infinitely more wonderful. "God so loved the world," &c. "The blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin." "Come unto me all that are heavy laden." These wonders are beyond all comparison. It is all wonder. They will be wonderful, realities for eternity. They never lose their freshness.

Thirdly: *That the realities of the Bible are inexhaustible.* "Wondrous things in their nature, and wondrous things in their plenitude." Students of great piety and talent have spent years in studying the Bible. Have they brought to light all its mysteries? Have they declared the whole of its contents? Have they found its end? Have they fathomed the depths of this great ocean of truths? Have they reached the heights of its everlasting mountains of truths which are hidden in the heavens of divine love. No. It is full of wondrous things to-day. The deeper you sink into the bowels of the earth, richer minerals will be found. The further you leave the shore, deeper is the sea; the higher you climb the mountain, the wider the prospects. So with the Bible—the deeper you plunge into its treasures, the richer they are; the further you leave its shores, the deeper it is; and the higher you climb its hills of truths, the more wonderful they appear.

Its treasures will not be less when time shall be no more. It is impossible for a finite mind to explore the whole of God's word ; there is no end to the knowledge it contains—no end to the things it reveals, and no end to the peace and comfort which accrue from it to the child of God.

Fourthly : *That mankind stands in need of perceiving these wonderful realities.* "That I may behold the wondrous things out of thy law." The *things* contained in the Bible are *things* that the world has need of knowing and perceiving. The well-being of the spiritual universe depends on knowing and perceiving them. It is the Bible alone that reveals to man a personal and a benevolent God. It is the Bible alone that reveals the method of salvation through the cross of Christ. It is the Bible alone that tells of the happy destiny of the Christian, and the miserable end of the sinner. We want to perceive and feel *these things*—the moral truths that the Bible contains.

III. THAT THE REMOVAL OF THIS SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS IS GOD'S WORK. "Open thou mine eyes." David appealed to God—God is the author of spiritual life. It is God alone that can open the eyes of the sinner. It was He in the beginning that said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night." We know not the power of one of the angels of the highest rank, but he cannot create in us a new heart, it is God's work. "I will give thee a new heart." Nor can the angel give us a right spirit, it is God's work. "A new spirit will I give thee." Nor can any being remove the spiritual darkness, it is God's work. He, and He alone has the power to open the understanding and give light to the conscience in the face of Jesus Christ. Philosophers and sages have tried to remove this blindness, but in vain. The world was sinking deeper in sin and darkness. The end in view of all the systems that have been introduced by them was for its removal, to have light to shine through the mysteries of life and death ; but these systems were deprived of the elements suited for its removal the darkness was increasing.

It was the blind leading the blind, till at last the darkness had increased till it could be felt as the darkness of Egypt. But, thanks be to God, He is able to remove it, He has provided suitable means to disperse the moral darkness, He has prepared an "*eye-salve*" that man may see. God works by means in the natural world, so in the *moral*. He removes this darkness,

Firstly : By the agency of his *word*. The entrance of God's word to the soul giveth light and understanding, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul."

Secondly : By the agency of his *Holy Spirit*. His Spirit applies the word to the conscience. Application. We see (1) The necessity of applying to God for the removal of this spiritual darkness. God alone can remove the effects of sin. (2) The impossibility of being happy without divine light and life. (3) The obligation of the Christian to God for being possessed with light to perceive the truths of the Bible. Natural light is God's gift. May we thank Him for it! Spiritual illumination is the gift of God's grace. May we apply it to the glory of God and the well-being of ourselves!

J. O. GRIFFITHS.



SUBJECT : *The Purpose of Being.*

"This my joy therefore is fulfilled."—John iii. 29.

Analysis of Homily the Seven Hundred and Seventy-First.

OUR Lord was diligently prosecuting his mission. He was teaching, baptising, working miracles, and to a great extent commanding the attention of the people. The disciples of John saw the great influence of Jesus. They also had a dispute with a Jew about purifying—a dispute most probably as to the relative value of the baptism of Jesus and that of John. They were jealous of their master, and went to him complaining of the popularity of Jesus. In

reply, John told them that all power and success are from heaven, and, therefore, they should not complain of the work of Jesus and its influence. He also showed them that the thing of which they complained was in accordance with his own delivered testimony. He had proclaimed himself to be not the Messiah, but the harbinger of the Messiah. He was not the Bridegroom, but the friend of the Bridegroom, and, as such, his work was to introduce the Bridegroom to the Bride. He had done this work. The popularity of Jesus, of which they complained, was a proof that his mission was accomplished. Therefore he was not envious because of it, but rejoiced in it. John was not the Sun, but the morning-star—the herald of the dawn. The Sun was rising, and in its glory the light of the herald-star was fast fading away; not setting in darkness, but gradually melting away in the more splendid light. In this John realized the fulfilment of his joy, because it was the fulfilment of his mission. He stands before us in a very noble aspect. He had been called to a special mission, had been true to his call, had worked out his mission, and he rejoiced in the completion of his work though it involved his decrease and another's increase.

Every man has his own life-work to do as truly as the Baptist had his. The all-wise and benevolent Creator has called nothing into existence without assigning to it its own place and mission. Everthing in the whole universe of God came into existence as the result of a divine purpose, and forms part of a divine plan. No two men are exactly alike; nor are the spheres and circumstances of any two men exactly alike. As the God of our life is perfectly acquainted with both ourselves and our circumstances, his plan concerning us and our works must be suited to our peculiar fitnesses and the peculiar claims which are upon us. Thus, He has a will concerning every man, and addresses a definite call to every man. The most common-place life is wondrously august in its origin, immensely important in its possibilities, and solicitously observed by God. Regarded thus, no life is common-place. Every man, woman, and child is lifted into a state of

awful significance. Every human life may become sublime by conformity to the plan and obedience to the call of God : may also become a thing most degraded and loathsome by disobeying the call and disregarding the plan of God.

The importance of knowing our definite place and work must be obvious to all. If we know not our place, to fill it will be impossible ; if we know not our work we cannot do it, but shall "labour in vain and spend our strength for nought." Our mission in life *is ascertainable*. The idea of a Divine plan for us to work out involves the idea that that plan may be known to us. The idea of a Divine call is absurd unless it be possible for us to hear that call. We may ascertain our definite work in life by discovering that for which we are most fitted, by observing the claims arising from our position and circumstances, and by listening to the voice of God. If it be objected that men have entered upon enterprises for which they were unfitted, assigning as a reason that they were called by God to do so, we reply that the fault was not in the Divine speaker, but in the human listener. "The *meek* will he guide in judgment," &c. "If any lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that," &c. No duty can be binding unless it is known, but men are blamed by God for not living in harmony with his counsel ; we infer, therefore, that his counsel may and ought to be known by all. Our mission in life *is accomplishable*. God never calls men to perform impossibilities. Knowing perfectly the power of every man, He never calls any man to a task beyond his power. He who calls us to truth, holiness, love, Christian heroism, communicates the strength needful to enable us to obey the call. We may turn a deaf ear to the call of God, endeavour to work out our own selfish and sinful plans, and become "wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever." We may both know and do that to which God calls us, work out his plan concerning us, fulfil our life-purpose, and move onward in the divine path of being, ever growing, ever brightening. The text teaches that thus to fulfil the purpose of our being is intensely joyous—

the fulfilment of our joy. We shall endeavour to establish and illustrate this position. By fulfilling the purpose of our being we shall realize—

I. THE JOY OF HAVING DONE SOME TRUE THING. There is a positive gladness in doing, and in having done, anything that is good and worthy. Our sleep is more restful when we have earned its repose by a day of worthy toil. The man who is working apart from the divine plan does nothing true, nothing lasting. He may toil incessantly, but his efforts are fruitless as regards real good; they all end in vanity. His work is false, his life is false, the result of both is a lie, and a lie must, sooner or later, perish. The good alone is permanent; the evil must come to nought. But the man who listens to the divine call realizes joy in his work. His "work is worship"; he is blessed in it. The result of his labour will be joyous. It remains, and will remain evermore. A good deed is immortal. Our Master, noblest of workers, found work most joyous. "My meat and drink," said He, "is to do the will," &c.

II. THE JOY OF HAVING DONE OUR OWN WORK. It is strengthening to know that we are filling the place and doing the work appointed us by God. There can be no joy in doing the work of another. He who has ascertained his mission and is fulfilling it, however menial his work may be, knows that it is his own—the work for which he is fitted. By doing it he is rising in dignity of character and in blessedness. By faithfully performing his lowly duties the Great Master is moulding him into beauty, and fitting him for a higher province. And when the end cometh, he will not mourn that his sphere was not greater and more prominent, but will rejoice that he has been enabled to fulfil his destiny. He has done "his own work, and shall have rejoicing in himself and not in another."

III. THE JOY OF ANTICIPATING OUR REWARD. The true-hearted labourer, like the Baptist, reaps much reward in this

world. To a great extent his reward is already within him, and his joy already fulfilled. But, having assiduously cultivated the talent which God gave him in the place and manner which He appointed, he will be rewarded by Him by a further recognition of his work and by introduction to more exalted posts of service. His own "joy is fulfilled," but he will shortly be welcomed "into the joy of his Lord." He who has finished the work which God gave him to do, looks onward in the calm eventide of life to the "Well done" of the Master, and is thrilled with joyous anticipation. The "fullness of joy" is "reserved in heaven" for all who are faithful on earth.

IV. THE JOY OF WITNESSING THE INFLUENCE OF OUR WORK.

"To be quiet and do our own business," breathing forth an influence kindly and holy, is to live a noble life. To communicate an elevating, strengthening thought to the depressed and doubting; to wipe the tear from the cheek of the sorrowful; to impart hope and courage to the weary and heartless; to point sinful and suffering humanity to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"; these are engagements most divine and joy-giving. Now, there are few men who live a pure, brave life, and perform true and generous deeds for their fellow-men, but are permitted to some extent to see the result of their life and work before they leave this world. The sight is very joyous. I know of nothing more humbling and blessed than to know that we have been honoured as the channel through which the gifts of God have been conveyed to our brother men. Many a godly labourer has shed tears of grateful joy when he has realized the knowledge that he has been the means of blessing men. This joy is the heritage of all who faithfully obey the call and work out the plan of God.

V. THE JOY OF HAVING DONE SOMETHING IN WORKING OUT THE PLAN OF GOD.

How the heart grows and expands with the benevolence and grandeur of the purpose of God towards our race! He designs to raise sinful and ruined humanity

to holiness and honour by his own love, &c. Such a plan seems far too magnificent for us to take any part in its development. Yet to this God calls us. This are we doing if we are complying with his will. We are promoting the enthronement of righteousness, the universal triumph of truth and love. What a joy will it be in the end to know that we have been co-workers with God in the grand redemptive labour! that we have done some little in furthering the realization of his sublime purposes! It will be a "joy unspeakable, and full of glory"; and will be realized by all who fulfil the design of their being.

Strive, my brother, earnestly and devoutly to ascertain the Divine purpose concerning thee, and, in the strength of grace, to fulfil it. Listen calmly and meekly for the Divine voice, and assiduously seek to obey it. Know thy work and do it; and so thy joy shall be fulfilled. The end of our work-day approaches fast. Irresistibly, constantly, rapidly time rushes on; and ere long all its opportunities of culture, service, and blessing will have departed from us for ever. What will thy condition be? What will thy review of thy life then be? Will it be, "My days are past, my purposes are broken off?" or, "This my joy, therefore, is fulfilled?" Which?

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SUBJECT: *Commanding Gifts.*

"Covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."—1 Cor. xii. 31.

Analysis of Homily the Seven Hundred and Seventy-Second.

THE English reader may tax the apostle with inconsistency. He may ask, how can any way be more excellent than that which is marked out by the possession and cultivation of the best gifts? The Greek student will observe that the word translated "best" is a comparative adjective, and may

be rendered "the greater gifts," "the superior gifts," and those which in popular estimation *seem* to be more striking and more attractive, those which command attention, and promise the possessor a large measure of usefulness and success.

The Corinthian Church was richly endowed with these superior gifts. They could speak with tongues, they could heal diseases, they could work miracles ; in these remarkable endowments they considered that they were far beyond their spiritual father who had begotten them in the Gospel. (1 Cor. iv. 8—15.) But the view which the apostle formed of their condition is very painful and humiliating. (2 Cor. xii. 21, 22.) "I fear lest when I come I shall not find you such as I would," &c., "Lest my God will humble me among you."

These commanding gifts the apostle exhorts them to covet earnestly ; to be zealous respecting their possession and use (as the word is rendered 1 Cor. xiv. 12). This fervent desire was to be entertained in strict subordination to the edifying of the Church, "yet show I unto you a more excellent way," a way which rises far above them all, viz., the law of love as he proceeds to explain in the following chapter.

The commanding gifts which were so highly valued by the Corinthians are now no longer found in the Church of Christ, but there are other endowments, rare and peculiar gifts, which may lawfully awaken our zeal and enkindle our desire, though we remember that the rule of charity mounts immeasurably above them all in value and perpetuity. In the present day, there are commanding gifts possessed by a few in the Church, to which all may lawfully aspire, so long as these gifts are never considered to be substitutes for the more excellent way.

These gifts may be summed up under three heads. (1) The power of popular address. (2) The talent of literary success. (3) The influence of a winsome manner.

I. THE POWER OF POPULAR ADDRESS FROM PULPIT OR PLAT-

FORM IS ACKNOWLEDGED TO BE A COMMANDING GIFT. The "applause of listening senates to command," the faculty of arresting the attention of an audience, of directing their minds into an especial train of thought, the use of language intelligible to all classes of hearers; embellished with apt and striking illustrations; the power of exciting at will emotions of fear or hope, of trust, of joy, of high-minded resolve and virtuous indignation—this is indeed a commanding quality closely analogous to the superior gifts which the Corinthians are exhorted to covet with a holy zeal.

II. Connected with this faculty of popular address IS THE GIFT OF LITERARY SUCCESS—ability to inform the understanding, direct the judgment, move the affections, and enkindle the imagination by means of the press so as to work out the same results by the pen as the living speaker effects by his voice. A writer who lived like a hermit and never emerged from his solitude may yet speak and be spoken of for centuries after he has been gathered to his fathers. His winged words may take their flight to all the divisions of the world, may dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, exerting greater influence and more triumphant success than the vaunted ability of the Corinthians to speak with tongues.

But are all writers? Are all speakers? Have all the gifts of oratory or literary talent? There are commanding gifts distinct from intellectual eminence, such is—

III. THE MAGICAL INFLUENCE OF A WINSOME MANNER. We meet with some, chiefly, though not exclusively, of the gentler sex, who, by the exercise of peculiar tact, mysterious charm, and attractive grace, obtain access to rude and rugged hearts, which refused to yield to all ordinary influences. Some there are, not remarkable for excellency of speech, or extent of knowledge, who by penetration into character, by their faculty of discrimination and discernment, by indomitable energy and perseverance, effect results which confound the wisdom of the wise, and baffle the understanding of the

prudent. Thus many who have never quitted the privacy of domestic life, labour much for the edifying of the Church.

It may be said that these are natural gifts, and do not depend on cultivation. Wherever distinguished eminence is attained in any of these faculties, it will be generally found that there was some natural capacity or endowment like the blade which gave promise of the full corn in the ear. But in the exercise of talent, the rule holds good, "to him that hath shall be given." The man of moderate powers, by diligent attention, and careful assiduity, is generally found to rise above the expectations of his friends, while the man of genius continually disappoints the sanguine hopes which were entertained of his future usefulness.

The precept, "Covet earnestly the superior gifts," directs us to form a due estimate of their value, and of the responsibility which rests upon us to exercise these faculties as far as our competency extends. This injunction, too, may be regarded as a significant caution not to depreciate or exaggerate gifts of which we have a very limited portion. Some are ready to decry the gift of popular oratory, to represent popular preachers and speakers as led away by an unhappy facility of speech, which brings them their reward, though they do little for the edifying of the Church. It is the sign of a mean, base, and ignoble spirit, to shut one's eyes to the value of qualities which others enjoy in a pre-eminent measure, or to argue against their lawful use from their possible abuse; yet how often is this done by men of narrow minds and dwarfish understandings! But while we are careful not to depreciate these gifts, or those who possess them, let us guard against the other extreme, of exaggerating their worth, or holding men of remarkable talent in undue admiration. The effective heralds of the Cross have, generally speaking, been not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, noble, or learned; and many who have held no place in the halls of science, or guilds of literature, have attained great measure of success in working the work of the Lord.

These commanding gifts are not the essential characteristics

of Christ's kingdom ; however slender may be our pretensions to the possession of any of them, we may all pursue the more excellent way ; though gifts and tongues may cease, though oratorical talent may no longer be exercised, and literary power no longer be required, there will ever remain in the Church on earth faith, hope, and love, and the greater among these is love. This grace is the more excellent way, as it far outshines the most commanding gifts.

The following points may be noticed in the contrast between them. Love is universal in its effects and operations among all the children of God ; commanding gifts are from their very nature partially bestowed. Love is always beneficial to the possessor, and to the Church at large ; gifts may be a snare, prejudicial and injurious to the possessor, even though they are attended with great and permanent benefit to the Church universal. Love finds scope for its exercise in all ages and circumstances—in every sphere and condition of life—in sickness and in health—in prosperity and adversity—from the first dawn of human intelligence, to the faintest glimmer of consciousness. Gifts require peculiar circumstances for their exercise, and are affected by a variety of contingencies, which no one can venture to forecast. We are permitted, nay, we are commanded, to covet them earnestly, but we have need to rejoice with trembling, though we seek to excel for the edifying of the Church. (1 Cor. xiv. 12.)

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SUBJECT : *Following the Holy Dead.*

“That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”—Heb. vi. 12.

Analysis of Bomily the Seven Hundred and Seventy-Third.

MAN is an imitative being. His character is formed on the principle of imitation. Hence there is a family character and a national character. And hence, too, the

haracter of the existing generation is to a great extent the reproduction of that of the past. All men are at once followers of some and followed by others; they are imitated and imitating. Thus, no man liveth unto himself. Whilst there is but one perfect example, one whom it would be either safe or right to follow implicitly or entirely, all good men are, to the measure of their goodness, set forth by God as examples to their race. Nor do such men cease to be examples when they depart this life. Those who knew their excellences, are bound to imitate them. The living have something to do with the holy dead. Though they perhaps have done with us, we have not done with them. Their history entails on us obligations. In the text, for example, we are commanded to "be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." The words suggest two reasons for following the holy dead.

I. BECAUSE THEY HAVE REACHED A POSITION WORTH STRUGGLING AFTER. "They inherit the promises." To inherit the promises implies two things.

First: *A priceless possession.* What are "the promises" of heavenly happiness contained in the Bible? What is implied in having a prepared place amongst the "many mansions in our Father's house"—in being made "kings and priests" unto God; in entering into "the joy of the Lord"; in "sitting down upon the throne" with Christ; in being with the Redeemer in Paradise; in being a citizen of "the heavenly Jerusalem"; a possessor of the "inheritance incorruptible, undefiled," &c. To inherit such promises is to possess what they contain, and who shall tell what glory and blessedness they contain! It implies—

Secondly: *A permanent possession.* To inherit suggests durability of possession. Their crown is "immortal," their inheritance is "incorruptible," their life is "everlasting." Are not men who have reached such a position worth following? If men are ever disposed to follow those whose life has been a great success, let them follow the holy dead. Their lives

have proved a brilliant success. Another reason suggested in the text for following the holy dead is—

II. BECAUSE THEY HAVE REACHED THEIR POSITION BY MEANS AVAILABLE TO ALL. "Through faith and patience."

First: *By means of faith.* Faith implies an object. What was the great object of their faith? The great crowd of witnesses whose faith is celebrated in the eleventh chapter, and those multitudes which John saw in heaven, which no man could number, had none of our theological dogmas and ecclesiastical systems to believe in. They believed in Christ, in Him as the true Messiah, the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world. Faith in Him was their saving faith, and is still their saving faith.

Secondly: *By means of patience.* Patience implies trial; and they had their trials. They were tried by the world, the flesh, and the devil. Those to whom the apostles refers, had more than the ordinary trials of humanity. "They had bonds and imprisonment, they had trials of cruel mockings, they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, they were tempted, were slain with the sword, they wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy." They had, therefore, need of patience.

Thirdly: *By means of diligence.* "That ye be not slothful." Suggesting that they were diligent, and truly they must have been, they agonised to enter in at the strait gate, they took the kingdom by violence, they ran the race with earnestness, they fought the good fight of faith, they laid hold of eternal life, they gave all diligence to make their calling and election sure. Now what they did to attain their sublime position we can do—we can believe in Christ, we can be patient under trial, we can be diligent, always abounding in the work of the Lord. Let us, then, follow them, &c.

The Preacher's Finger-Post.

THE INCARNATION.

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."—1 Peter iv. 1.

THESE words contain four suggestive facts:—

I. THAT CHRIST SUFFERED IN HUMAN NATURE—"he suffered in the flesh," *i.e.*, in human nature. His sufferings in the flesh were (1) *great*—corporeal, social, mediatorial. (2.) *Ignominious*—poverty, obloquy, persecution, crucifixion.

II. That Christ suffered in human nature FOR MEN. "For us." (1.) He suffered *from* men. All his tortures came from the hands of men, though they were under the direction of God. "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God," &c. (2.) He suffered *for* men. All *loving* beings in a world of suffering must suffer *vicariously*, and the amount of their suffering will be measured by the purity and the depths of their love.

III. That Christ suffered in human nature for men, WITH A SPIRIT WHICH MEN SHOULD CULTIVATE. "Arm yourselves likewise with the same mind"

—τὴν αὐτὴν ἐννοίαν—the same idea—the same mode of thinking. What was Christ's great Thought, or Mind, in his suffering? (1.) *Profoundly religious*. The thought of the great Father was the dominant thought in his soul. To his will He was resigned, to his purpose He consecrated Himself. (2.) *Self-denyingly philanthropic*. He "pleased not himself." He was disinterestedness incarnate. This is the spirit which He has laid all men under obligation to cultivate. "Arm yourselves," &c.; "Christ hath suffered for us, leaving us an example that we should follow in his steps; who when he was reviled, reviled not again," &c.

IV. That the possession of the Spirit by us which inspired Christ in his sufferings IS THE POWER TO DELIVER US FROM MORAL EVIL. "He that hath suffered in the flesh," that is, suffered in the same spirit as Christ suffered, "hath ceased from sin." Just as the mind of Christ enters us, takes possession of us, and grows within us, do we free ourselves both from the dominion and the consequences of sin. On the other

hand, he that "hath not the spirit of Christ, is none of his." In vain is it for you, my brother, to expect that what Christ did for you in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem eighteen centuries ago, will be of any avail whatever to you unless that same mind which led to his sufferings, inspired Him under them, and was expressed by them, be in thee as the very soul of thy soul. It is "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus" that alone makes men "free from the law of sin and death." "If Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin."

THE RIGHT USE OF THE RESIDUE OF OUR TIME.

"That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God."—1 Peter iv. 2.

THE text states what is the grand design of Christ's mediation in relation to man, as indicated in our present sketch. It may be regarded as a succinct expression of our duty in relation to the residue of our earthly life. Another year is closing, and our life hastens to the point when all our material relationships will end for ever. How is man to spend "the rest of his time"? The text answers the question negatively and positively.

I. NEGATIVELY. "Not to the lusts of men!" This does not mean that we are to neglect our bodily interests, and not provide the food, raiment, shelter, exercise, and all the divers conditions of physical health and comfort. Sufferings inflicted on the body for the sake of the soul are a folly and a crime. He who violates the laws of the body, as truly sins against God as he who violates the laws of his soul. But it is the *lusts* of men that we have to eschew. What are the lusts? *Animal instincts grown to a dominant force.* Animal instincts should be subordinate to the soul; but the soul has the power to nurture them to sovereigns, and this power, alas, it employs. The brute has not this power. Whatever animal desire has grown to dominion is, in the sense of the Sacred writers, a "lust." And how many of those desires have attained to this regal sway! Lusts rule the world—"the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, the pride of life." Let the residue of our time be spent in overcoming those lusts that war against the soul—"for the world passeth away, and the lust thereof."

II. POSITIVELY. "To the will of God." This implies
1) *That God has a will.* 2) *That God has a will concern-*

ing men. (3) *That God's will is revealed.* What is the will of God concerning man? We shall mention two or three things distinctly specified. First: *It is his will that we should believe in Christ.* "This is the work of God that ye believe on him." (John vi. 29.) "This is the commandment of God that ye believe in his Son Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." (1 John iii. 23.) Secondly: *It is his will that we shall be purified from sin.* "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." (1 Thess. iv. 3.) Thirdly: *It is his will that we should cultivate a practical gratitude for all the blessings of life,* "for this is the will of God in Christ concerning you," &c. (1 Thess. v. 18.) Fourthly: *It is his will that every man shall be saved.* He is not willing that any should perish. "He will have all men to be saved." (1 Tim. ii. 4.)

CONCLUSION: Let the remainder of our life, then, while on earth be to the will of God. "The world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

SARAH'S FUNERAL: THE TRANSITORY IN HUMAN LIFE.

"And Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying, I am a stranger and a sojourner with

you: give me a possession of a burying-place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight."—Gen. xxiii. 3, 4.

THIS chapter presents to us a most touching narrative on the death and burial of one of the most interesting women that figure on the page of history. Sarah being the wife of Abraham stands as the mother of that people of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, "who is over all God blessed for ever." Abraham's conduct in treating with the sons of Heth for a grave for Sarah, as recorded in the context, reflects great credit upon his character. Many noble attributes stand out conspicuously in this solemn transaction. There is (1) Great self-possession. Though his heart was bleeding, yet with what a calm dignity he negotiates with these men for a burying place! There is (2) Great social command. One cannot but be struck with the remarkable influence which Abraham had with the men in whose land he was but a stranger and a sojourner. "Hear us, my lord: thou art a mighty prince among us; in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead: none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead," &c. Those heathens had eyes to see and hearts to feel the

attributes of goodness which the patriarch exhibited in their midst. There is good, as we have elsewhere shown, in heathendom. There is (3) Great independency of soul. Did Abraham grasp at the offer of the land as a gift which these heathens so generously made? Not he. He had no avarice in his soul. "And Abraham bowed down himself before the people of the land. And he spake unto Ephron, in the audience of the people of the land, saying, But if thou wilt give it, I pray thee, hear me : I will give thee money for the field ; take it of me, and I will bury my dead there." But the text brings to our notice *the transitory in human life*. And this is a subject especially suitable at the close of another year. It suggests—

I THE TRANSITION CHARACTER OF PERSONAL BEAUTY. It would seem that Sarah was a woman possessing great personal attractions. The Egyptians were struck with her beauty. (Gen. xii. 14.) Abraham had felt her charms, but the object which was once so beautiful in his eyes had now become loathsome, and he seeks a place to "bury her out of his sight." The transitoriness of personal beauty shows—

First: *The folly of those*

who pride themselves on their personal attractions. The symmetrical form, the fair complexion, the expressive features, the rosy hue, the fascinating look, the dignified bearing, the graceful agility, what are these? Merely as the flower of the field that unfolds its beauty only to be scorched by the sun or blighted by the wind. It exposes : Secondly : *The absurdity of forming the closest alliances in life on account of personal charms.* He who loves another on the ground of physical beauty, has no lasting foundation for his affection. That must fade. Moral excellence is the grand reason for love. Moral beauty needs never fade.

"Beauty is but a vain and doubtful good,
A shining gloss that fadeth suddenly ;
A flower that dieth when first it
'gins to bud ;
A brittle glass that's broken presently ;
A doubtful good, a gloss, a glass,
a flower,
Lost, faded, broken, dead within
an hour. SHAKESPEARE.

The text suggests—

II. THE TRANSITORINESS OF MATERIAL RELATIONSHIPS. Many years had Sarah lived with Abraham, she was the wife of his youth, she had been the partner of his sorrows and joys ; close and strong were the ties that bound their hearts together.

But here is the disruption of all those ties. All the physical relationships which unite us on this earth are dissolved in death. They "that have wives will be as though they had none." In eternity, they never marry nor are given in marriage. Spiritual relationships consisting in a common love for a common cause and a common God, is the only relationship that will survive death, and flourish in the eternal hereafter. Let us cultivate this, especially with those to whom we are closely related by the ties of nature, that we may meet and mingle with them in the world to come. The text suggests :—

III. THE TRANSITORINESS OF WORLDLY DISTINCTIONS.

Sarah was a wealthy woman. Flocks and herds in abundance, and numerous attendants to execute her commands. But all that was now required for her, was just sufficient earth to bury her body out of sight. The greatest monarch will require no more; the poorest pauper will have no less. "As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand." (Eccles. v. 15.) We brought nothing into this world, and it is cer-

tain we can carry nothing out. This should teach us. First: The folly of either getting or claiming respect, on the ground of mere secular distinctions. Wealth is no part of ourselves. All that we have of the earth was here before we came, and will be here when we have gone. Secondly: The folly of setting our heart upon worldly objects. A pagan moralist has said: "Thou art a passenger, and thy ship has put into anchor for a few hours. The tide and the wind serve, and the pilot calls thee to depart, and thou art amusing thyself, and gathering shells and pebbles on the shore, till they sail without thee."

"WATCHMAN, WHAT OF THE NIGHT?"

"The burden of Dumah. He calleth to me out of Seir, Watchman, what of the night? Watchman, what of the night? The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye; return, come."—Isa. xxi. 11, 12.

THIS is a detached prophecy, it stands alone, having no connection either with what precedes, or what follows. The subject of it is called the "burden." A word not unfrequently used by the prophets to designate their message, literally their messages were often burdens,

they were weighted with heavy judgments. The message of Christian teachers is no burden. The word "Dumah," here, stands undoubtedly for Edom, a country occupied by the descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob. It was a piece of territory stretching along the south of Palestine, and extending so far as the extremity of the Dead Sea. It is now a vast desert traversed by wandering Arabs. Seir was its capital, a mountain range lying south of the Dead Sea. Between the Edomites and the Israelites, there had subsisted a hostility that had run down through centuries, a hostility that had sprung from their first ancestors Jacob and Esau. In this passage, there is an expression of this hostility. The Jews are in sorrow, their temple is destroyed, their city is in ruins, their captives in a strange land, and the Edomites instead of expressing sympathy with them under their trials, feel, as they express themselves in the 132nd Psalm, an exultant joy. The prophet, here represents himself as a "watchman" in the night of their sorrow amidst the ruins of Jerusalem. He is watching earnestly for the morning, for the breaking of some star of hope in the clouds. In the midst of his solitude and

sorrow he hears the cruel and sarcastic voice of the Edomites sounding out from Mount Seir, "Watchman, what of the night?" It is a taunting voice. It means, Where is your city now? Where is your temple? Where is your glory now? What of the night, watchman? Where are your signs of morning? To this the watchman replies. "The morning cometh." As if he had said, "I see a few rays in the east, and the day of prosperity will be here yet." But he adds further, "The night cometh too." As if he had said, "You may taunt as you please, but whilst there is a morning for us, there is a night for you." This seems to be the spirit and the meaning of the prophecy. The text gives us three subjects for thought.

I. GOOD MEN SUFFERING. The pious Jews were now in deepest sorrow. Hear their complaint, "By the rivers of Babylon," &c. (Psa. cxxxvii.) It was their night. The good have often a night. It was night with Abraham on Moriah. It was night with Jacob when he said, "All these things are against me." It was night with Job when he exclaimed, "O, that I knew where I might find Him!" It was night with the disciples when, with terror,

they forsook their Master and fled. It was night with Christ when He exclaimed, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" *Physical suffering, secular difficulties, social bereavements, spiritual temptations, conscious imperfections*, often turn the sky of a good man into night.

II. WICKED MEN TAUNTING. The voice from Mount Zion was, "What of the night?" The language is sarcastic and contemptuous. The wicked, instead of sympathising with the good in their sufferings, often treat them with heartless ridicule. Thus they taunted Christ upon the cross; thus they dealt with Stephen, and thus with the good in trial in all ages. The spirit is seen now in various questions that are addressed to the Church. (1.) Where is your superior happiness? (2.) Where are the triumphs of your cause? (3.) Where is your spiritual superiority to other men?

III. THE GREAT GOD SPEAKING TO BOTH. "The morning cometh and also the night." First: *His voice to the good*. "The morning cometh." There is a morning for the Church on this earth. There is a bright day to dawn. There is a morning to the good in eternity. What a bright morning that

will be! The beginning of a day without storms, without clouds, without end. The sun that lights it up shall set no more. Secondly: *The voice to the wicked*. "The night cometh." Where is Edom now? The NIGHT COMETH, sinner: yet it cometh; the shadows are gathering already," &c.

THORNS.

"And the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it."—Luke viii. 7.

THORNS are a protection to the flower; they make us careful how we touch the rose; there is danger in appropriating what is beautiful and good. Thorns which inflame and tear, like evil thoughts, lusts, diseases, must be cleared away and burned. Thorns which hinder progress must be trampled down with feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace.

As it is *in life* so is it *in the heart*. There are thorns *in the heart*; if allowed to grow, the effect is most mischievous. The text notices three kinds—

I. CARES are thorns in the heart of man and may hinder his progress or stay it altogether. First: A man may be impressed by holy thought and feeling, utterly

free from open sin, faithful in duty, and yet weakened and hindered by care. Care, a very subtle temptation ; it usually springs out of a sense of duty, an anxiety to be or do right, still it often misleads or hinders. The eye must be upwards. Secondly : The troubles that *may* come are more numerous than those that do come. The fear that often accompanies the prospect is already a defection, for trust has failed or is clouded. But the Saviour is very merciful. Thirdly : And when trouble does actually come, it should lead to God ; it often leads away from Him. The path of departure a downhill path. We look away from Christ to ourselves, our feeble powers, our inability to calculate what may come, or to meet what is close at hand, *e.g.*, the poverty or failure, or feebleness that threatens. Faith is well nigh shipwrecked ; hope is in the pilot. Faith is well nigh dead, the physician our hope. Faith is barren, it needs the light and warmth of the sun. Life is too wearisome ; we need the sabbath rest to call off our thoughts from the earthly and fix them on the heavenly.

II. RICHES are thorns. First : What mistakes men make, (1) riches promise

largely but do not fulfil ; the richest are often the poorest because the least satisfied.

(2) Riches often very hindering ; heavy laden pilgrims travel very slowly. (3) Instead of relieving of care they often give more care than we knew before. What they give is often little as compared with what they require. Secondly : The dangers of *becoming* rich greater than these connected with being rich. The man who is born rich is safe from many temptations to which these are exposed ; early education and experience prevent pride and boasting. Some by honourable and successful toil become rich and receive the homage riches can secure. This the hour of danger ; a flattering world always more dangerous than a hostile. So riches often become thorns choking the good and true ; the large-hearted becoming mean and narrow when circumstances change. Thirdly : Changes in mode of living consequent on acquired wealth a source of danger. Enlarged means bring enlarged social intercourse, and the dangers of society are added to the other dangers ; a worldly spirit often results from such a conjunction of circumstances ; children, too, are filled with notions unsuitable to their condition or

prospects, become assuming, less self-reliant, unequal to the energy life demands in order to success.

III. THE PLEASURES OF THIS LIFE are thorns again. We are not to understand by this term anything sensual or unworthy, but simply pleasures which come with the altered form life assumes when riches and influence become ours. The children of God may stand, need not yield; but many do; sin always the more dangerous the more subtle it is. Therefore, eyes up—believe—all things possible to him that believeth.

R. V. PRICE, M.A., LL.B.

THE TRUE OBJECT OF WORSHIP.

"Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth; The Lord is his name."—Amos v. 8.

THE Lord as an object of worship is set forth here in three aspects.

I. AS THE CREATING GOD.

"Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion. This suggests, First: *His unlimited power*. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and the host of them by the breath of his mouth." Se-

condly: *His manifold wisdom*. "The Lord by wisdom hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens." Thirdly: *His boundless benevolence*. He created great luminaries and fixed them in the firmament in order to diffuse their refreshing light and brilliant beams over our world. The sun rules the day, the moon and stars the night. God's bounty is lavished on the world night and day.

II. AS THE PROVIDING GOD.

"That calleth the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the earth." This implies, First: *God's government over the world*. At his bidding the waters of the sea hasten to the clouds, and again fall in rain upon the face of the earth. Secondly: *Man's dependence upon God*. Rain is a universal blessing, and is essential for growth, fertility, and happiness. The earth must be irrigated, and none can command the clouds to pour out their contents but God.

III. AS THE REDEEMING GOD.

"And turneth the shadow of death into the morning." This indicates, First: *God's dominion over death*. Secondly: *His gracious presence with his people in the greatest emergency*. His smiling countenance turns the shadow and dark-

ness of death into a happy and refreshing day. They hope in death. They die in faith. Thirdly: *His faithfulness to his word unto the last.* He will realise his promises to them in life, in death, and in eternity. Seek the Lord, the Creator, the Preserver, and the only Saviour. Seek Him who is mighty to save.

JOSEPH JENKINS.

THE RIGHT USE OF PROPERTY.*

"And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own."—Luke xvi. 12.

I. *Men's earthly property is not their "own," but "another's."*

II. *The faithful use of this earthly property is an evidence of righteous principle.* "If ye have not been faithful," &c.

III. *The possession of this principle is essential to the obtainment of heaven.* "Who shall give you?" &c.

IV. *That heaven, when once possessed by men, is in a sense their own—"your own."*

CHRISTMAS.*

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." —1 Tim. i. 15, 16.

I. *The coming of Christ to th world is the chief fact in the*

many great facts in the world's history: *physical*—creation, deluge, earthquakes; *political*—rise and fall of empires, &c.; *social.* All revolve round this. (Show it, prove it.)

II. *Opposition to Christianity is the greatest sin in the world's history.* This was Paul's great sin, and hence he calls himself "the chief of sinners," "blasphemer," "persecutor," "injurious." He who opposes Christianity thereby proves that he can oppose the best thing in the universe.

III. *The pardon of this sin is the chief display of mercy in the world's history.* "I obtained mercy that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering."

IV. *These facts demand the attention of man above all other facts in the world's history.* "This is a faithful saying," &c.

* Sketches from the manuscripts of the late Rev. CALEB MORRIS. Having a large number of these in our possession, many of which are in Mr. Morris's own handwriting, we shall publish them from month to month.

Seeds of Sermons on the Book of Proverbs.

(No. CXXXVI.)

THE MAN-WARD FEELING, AND THE INFINITE INTELLIGENCE OF GOD.

"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord: but the prayer of the upright is his delight. The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness. Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die. Hell and destruction are before the Lord; how much more then the hearts of the children of men." —Prov. xv. 8—11.

I. GOD'S MAN-WARD FEELING.

The text speaks of "abomination" and "delight" in God. God is not a being of sheer intellect, one that sees all and *feels* nothing; indifferent alike to the good and the bad, the happy and the miserable. He has a heart. Within his Being there is an infinite ocean of the tenderest sensibilities. But the text teaches us that He has *man-ward* feelings—feelings that have relation to sinful men on this little planet. This is wonderful, wonderful that man can affect the heart of the Infinite. The text suggests three things concerning this man-ward feeling. First: *It is mingled.* There is "abomination" and "delight." His feelings in relation to man partake of the agreeable and the disagreeable. How the Infinite can feel anything like sadness we know not, but the Bible speaks of Him as being "grieved," "troubled," as "repenting," &c. There is an awful wail of sadness in some of the divine utterances. His man-ward feeling, Secondly: *Has respect to character.* His abomination is toward the "wicked," and his delight is toward the "upright." "The sac-

riifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord." The wicked make sacrifices sometimes from custom, sometimes from fear, but their sacrifices, however costly in their nature, and scriptural in their mode and form of presentation, are an "abomination." Their sacrifice is an acted lie, and is an offence to the Omniscient. Cain is an example. (Gen. iv. 3—5.) The Scribes and Pharisees are examples. (Matt. xv. 8—9.) On the contrary, the "prayer of the upright is his delight, and he loveth him that followeth after righteousness." To Daniel the angel said, "At the beginning of thy supplication the commandment came forth and I am come to show thee that thou art greatly beloved." (Dan. v. 22.) Of Cornelius it was said, "Thy prayer and thy alms are come as a memorial before the Lord." (Acts x.) So pleasing is the prayer of the good to the Father, that "He seeketh such to worship Him." That the Infinite cannot look at the good and the bad with the same feeling is clear (1) from the testimony of universal conscience (2), from the history of providential judgments (3), from the declarations of holy Scripture. Another remark which the text suggests concerning God's man-ward feeling, is, Thirdly: *It expresses itself in human experience.* "Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die." There are wrapt in these words three great principles. (1.) Wrong must meet with suffering. The man that forsaketh the way must have correction. (2.) Suffering

must develop character. To the wicked it is "grievous," and he hateth reproof." He murmurs, rebels, and is full of resentment to God. On the contrary it is implied that the righteous accepts it in the proper spirit of resignation, acquiescence, &c. (3.) That character must determine destiny. "He that hateth reproof shall die." But the point to be here observed is that all this experience in man in relation to the right and the wrong, expresses God's feeling. There must be punishment for sin. That is God's feeling in law.

II. GOD'S INFINITE INTELLIGENCE. "Hell and destruction are before the Lord: how much more then the hearts of the children of men?" Three things are implied in this wonderful passage. First: *That the human heart has secret abysses within it.* "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. xvii. 9.) So profound are some of the secret things of the soul that man does not know his own heart. Circumstances often bring up to life and power things of which he was utterly unconscious before. "Who can understand his errors," &c. Secondly: *That the secret abysses of the human heart are not so great as hell and destruction.* Hell is the *Sheol* in Hebrew, and the *Hades* in Greek; and it signifies the unseen world, the great universe of spirits. And perhaps especial reference is here had to that section which is under the damnation of eternal justice, fallen angels, and ruined men. What secret abysses there are in each of these souls! We read of the depths of Satan. What depths are those? Thirdly: *God thoroughly knows the abysses of hell and destruction and therefore He must be thoroughly conversant with the human heart.* "Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering be-

fore him," said Job. His eye peers into the deepest depths of hell. How thoroughly does He understand man! "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." (Jer. xvii. 10.)

(No. CXXXVII.)

THE SCORNER.

"A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him; neither will he go unto the wise."—Prov. xv. 12.

THE general definition of scorn is, "that disdainful feeling or treatment which springs from a person's opinion of the meanness of an object, and a consciousness or belief of his own superiority or worth." It is not necessarily bad. Scorn for the mean and the immoral, is a state of mind both virtuous and praiseworthy, but scorn for the true and the right, the noble and the divine is a state of mind akin to the worse spirit in hell itself. It is to such the text refers. The scorner here is one who scoffs at religion and God. As this character has frequently come under our attention in passing through this book,* we shall very briefly state three things that are here implied concerning him.

I. HE REQUIRES REPROOF. This is implied in the passage. And truly if the scorner requires not reproof, who does? He should be reproofed, First: For his *self-ignorance*. He who arrogates to himself a superiority to divine teaching, is utterly unacquainted with his own limited faculties, moral relations, and spiritual needs. Of all ignorance, self-ignorance is the most inexcusable, criminal, and ruinous. He

* See HOMILIST, vol. x., third series, p. 107.

should be reproved, Secondly: For his *impious presumption*. The scorner sets his mouth against the heavens. He dares not only to adjudicate on the doing of God, but to ridicule the utterances of infinite wisdom. Surely such a man requires reproof.

II. HE SHUNS REPROOF. "He will not go unto the wise." Why? Because the wise would reprove him. The very instinct of a truly wise man leads to the moral castigation of such characters as scorners. The wise man cannot tolerate such iniquity. The scoffer knows it, and he shuns the society of the good. First: *He will not read books that will deal seriously and honestly with his character.* Secondly: *He will not attend a ministry that will expose his character in the broad light of eternal law.* Thirdly: *He will not join the society that will deal truthfully with its members.* The scorner "will not go unto the wise." Not he. He shrinks from the light. He has a horror of having his own proud conceit and haughty imaginations denounced and brought to contempt.

III. HE HATES REPROOF. "The scorner loveth not one that reproveth him." He deems the man his enemy who tells him the truth; hence, he hates the honest Christian, the faithful minister. Scorners, thou needest reproof! The man who will "ring thee such a piece of chiding," as will make thee feel the moral turpitude of thy character, is thy friend. He to whom thou canst say, "Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul, and there I see such black and grained spots, as will not leave their tint," thou shalt feel one day to be the truest friend thou hast ever met.

(No. CXXXVIII.)

HUMAN HEARTS.

"A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken. The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge: but the mouth of fools feedeth on foolishness. All the days of the afflicted are evil: but he that is of a merry heart hath a continual feast." —Prov. xv. 13—15.

THE Bible speaks much about human hearts, and much to human hearts. It is a book pre-eminently for the heart, because the heart is the spring of man's activities, and the fountain of his history. In the text, there is a reference to different kinds of heart. Here is the merry and the mournful heart, the understanding and the foolish heart.

I. HERE IS THE MERRY AND THE MOURNFUL HEART. First: *Notice the merry heart.* By the merry heart we shall understand the Christianly cheerful heart: not the light, frivolous heart of the thoughtless and the gay. Godliness is an element that fills the whole soul with cheerfulness. Two things are said in the text of this "merry heart." (1.) It is a radiance to the countenance. It maketh "a cheerful countenance." A man's countenance is a mirror, in which you can see his soul. Emotions chisel their features on the brow. Man has an instinct to recognise this fact. We are physiognomists from childhood, judging evermore character from the face. This fact is (a) a great advantage in our social life. Did men show no soul in their faces, their presence would be as uninteresting as statues. Human society, if it could exist, would be oppressively monotonous. This fact suggests (b) the true method of beautifying the face. Beauty of countenance consisteth not in features, nor complexion, so much as in expression. A genial, frank, sunny look is that which fasci-

nates and pleases the beholder. Hence, make hearts cheerful by promoting Christianity, and you will make the presence of men and women mutually more attractive and pleasing. Stephen's Christianity made his face beam like that of an angel. Another thing said of this merry heart is, (2), it is a feast to the soul. "A merry heart hath a continual feast." The gratitude, reliance, the hope, the love of Christian cheerfulness, constitute the soul's best banquet. The banquet continues amidst material pauperism. "Although the fig-tree," &c. It is a "continual feast." Secondly: Notice the *mournful heart*. Two things are here said of the mournful heart." (1.) It breaks the spirit. "By sorrow of heart the spirit is broken." There are hearts over which there hangs a leaden cloud of gloom. All is discontent, foreboding sadness. This breaks the spirit. It steals away all vigour and elasticity from the soul. The faculty—rallying force of the soul—is gone; and the machine falls to pieces. The mournful heart (2) curses the whole life. "All the days of the afflicted are evil." The afflicted here are those whose sorrow of heart have broken their spirit. Truly this gloom of soul turns the whole of a man's life into a night with scarcely a star to relieve the darkness.

II. HERE IS THE UNDERSTANDING AND THE FOOLISH HEART. First: *The one "seeketh knowledge."* "The heart of him that hath understanding, seeketh knowledge." The man who hath a true, understanding, unsophisticated, unbiassed heart, seeketh knowledge, the highest knowledge, the knowledge of God, which is the centre and soul of all science. Such was the heart of Nicodemus, who came at night to Jesus in quest of knowledge. Such was the

heart of Mary, who sat at the feet of the great Teacher; of the Bereans, who searched the Scriptures for themselves. Secondly: *The other "feedeth on foolishness."* Souls, like bodies, have different tastes. Some souls have a taste—not a natural, but an acquired one—for foolishness. They have a relish for things which in the sight of reason and God are foolish. They seize those things with voracity, and with a zest ruminate on them afterwards.

CONCLUSION. Which of these hearts throb in thee, my brother? Men have different moral hearts. Hast thou the cheerful or the mourning heart, the understanding or foolish? Remember that as thy heart, so art thou—so art thou in thy character, in the universe, and before God.

No. CXXXIX.

THE DINNER OF HERBS, AND THE STALLED OX.

"Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great treasure, and trouble therewith. Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith."—Prov. xv. 16, 17.

THESE words present to us three subjects of thought. The secularly little with the spiritually good, the secularly much with the spiritually bad, and the better conjunction for man of the two.

I. THE SECULARLY LITTLE WITH THE SPIRITUALLY GOOD. Solomon gives a specimen here of the secularly little—"a dinner of herbs." A meaner repast one could scarcely have:—the mere food that nature gives the unreasoning cattle that feed in the meadow. The spiritually good he describes as "the fear of the Lord"—a loving reverence for the Great One. This is religion, this is moral goodness. The picture he brings before us, therefore, is that of a good

man in great poverty. This has ever been, and still is, a common sight. Some of the truest and the holiest men that ever trod this earth, have had to feed on such humble fare "as a dinner of herbs." Lazarus, who found his home in Abraham's bosom, was a beggar. The Son of God had nowhere to lay his head. This shows two things, First: *That poverty is not always a disgrace.* It is sometimes so. When it can be traced to indolence, extravagance, intemperance, &c., it is a disgrace; but where you find it in connection with the "fear of the Lord," it has nothing disreputable about it. The very rags of the good are far more honourable than the purple of the wicked. This shows, Secondly: *That there are higher rewards for virtue than material wealth.* If riches were the divine rewards for goodness, men would always be wealthy in proportion to their spiritual wealth. But it is not so; there are higher rewards for virtue than money. Spiritual freedom, a commanding conscience, uplifting hopes, inspiring purposes, fellowship with the divine, these are the rewards of goodness.

II. THE SECULARLY MUCH WITH THE SPIRITUALLY BAD. Here is a specimen of the secularly much, "a stalled ox." "A stalled ox," not a single joint. This brings up to us the picture of a man with his family and friends sitting around the table enjoying a splendid banquet, a well-fed, well-cooked, well-served ox, with all its attendant luxuries before them, but he has no spiritual goodness, he does not "fear the Lord." He has no love in him; spiritually he is "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity." This is a social scene as prevalent as the former. Wickedness and wealth we see

everywhere associated; and this has been felt in all ages, by the thoughtful, as one of the most painful and perplexing enigmas in the government of God. "I was envious," said Asaph, "at the foolish when I saw the prosperity of the wicked."

III. THE BETTER CONJUNCTION FOR MAN OF THE TWO. "*Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith.*" Mark, he does not say a dinner of herbs is better than a feast off the stalled ox, this would be absurd, contrary to the common sense and common experience of mankind. Poverty is not better than riches, but the reverse; poverty is a serious disadvantage, and wealth in itself is a great blessing; but what he says is this, it is better to be poor with religion, than to be rich without it. Take two men, one shall be an averagely rich ungodly man, the other an averagely poor and pious man. Solomon would say that the condition of the latter is better than that of the former, and truly so for two reasons. First: *His condition would be a more enjoyable one.** He would have a higher happiness. His happiness would spring from within, that of the other from without. The happiness of (1) the one, therefore, would be sensational the other spiritual. (2.) The one selfish, the other generous. (3.) Decreasing, the other heightening. The ungodly rich have their "*portion in this life,*" and in this life only. Secondly: *His condition would be a more honourable one.* (1.) The one is honoured for what he has, the other for what he is. (2.) The one is honoured less and less as people get morally enlightened, the other more and more.

* See HOMILIST, second series, vol. ii. p. 491.

(3.) The one is honoured only here by the depraved, the other is honoured yonder by angels and by God.

CONCLUSION: My poor pious brother, let not thy poverty oppress thee; riches and poverty are more in the heart than in the

hand; a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of things which he possesseth. The contented are ever wealthy, the avaricious ever poor. By thy dinner of herbs may rest the foot of that Jacob's ladder, by which thou canst exchange visits with the celestial.

The Pulpit and its Handmaids.

AN UNTHINKING PULPIT.

I.

A YOUNG raw preacher is a bird not yet fledged, that hath hopped out of his nest to be chirping on a hedge, and will be straggling abroad at what peril soever. The pace of his sermon is a full career, and he runs wildly over hill and dale till the clock stops him. The labour of it is chiefly in his lungs; and the only thing he has made in it himself is the faces. His action is all passion, and his speech interjections. He has an excellent faculty in bemoaning the people, and spits with a very good grace. His style is compounded of twenty several men's, only his body imitates some one extraordinary. He will not draw his handkerchief out of his place, nor blow his nose without discretion. His commendation is, that he never looks upon book; and, indeed, he was never used to it. He preaches but once a year, though twice on Sunday, for the stuff is still the same, only the dressing a little altered; he has more tricks with a sermon than a tailor with an old cloak, to turn it and piece it, and at last quite disguise it with a new preface. If he have waded further his profession, and would show

reading of his own, his authors are postils, and his school divinity a catechism. BISHOP EARLE.

II.

As an eagle, so long as her young ones be not fledged and thoroughly feathered, she doth not suffer them to go out of the nest, and to fly abroad; but after they be perfectly winged, and in the beauty and strength of their feathers, she throweth them out of the nest, that they may fly and exercise their wings and feathers and use them to the end wherefore they have them; even so our Saviour Christ, that heavenly Eagle, after His resurrection, commanded his disciples to stay at Jerusalem, as it were in a nest, and not to depart thence until, on the day of Pentecost, He had filled them with the grace of the Holy Ghost; and then He commanded them, that, passing through the world and travelling through divers coasts of the earth, they should publish abroad, and spread far and near the Gospel of His kingdom.—*Things New and Old.*

III.

It is said of Archbishop Whitgift, that though he preached often, yet he never durst adven-

ture into the pulpit but he first wrote his notes in Latin, and afterwards kept them by him during his life; and he would say himself, "That whosoever took that pains before his preaching, the older he waxed the better he would discharge that duty: but he, if he trusted to his memory only, his preaching in time would become prattling." What shall we, then, say to those that rush into the pulpit without any preparation at all, that presume upon a *dabitur in illa hora*, so that *quicquid in buccam* (out comes that which lies uppermost)? Whether sense or nonsense, all is one, running like a horse with an empty cart over hedge and ditch, till the hour-glass stops them. It was the complaint of St. Jerome, of such shallow brains, in his comment on Ecclesiastes ix. 11. "*Nam videas in Ecclesia imperitissimos quosque florere, &c.*" You may see how, in the Church, the most ignorant are the most esteemed; and because they have profited in boldness of front and volubility of tongue, they are accounted the only preachers of the time; and, to speak the truth, impudence and ignorance are the only qualifications of such preachers—*Things New and Old.*

IV.

Zeuxis, the famous painter, was observed to be very slow at his work, and to let no piece of his go abroad into the world to be seen of men till he had turned it over and over, this side and that side, again and again, to see if he could spy any fault in it; and being upon a time asked the reason why he was so curious, why so long in drawing his lines, and so slow in the use of his pencil, he made this answer, "I am long in doing what I take in hand, because what I paint, I paint for eternity." What ministers do, they do for

eternity. Their words will ring for ever and ever in the memory of their auditors. Ah! more than ring in memory, they will work in their experience and help to shape their destiny. Every subject should be well studied, every truth well stated. In truth, the doctrine propounded has to come from the speaker's mouth as a thing of life, and radiate his countenance as with a beam from eternity.—EDITOR.

A SKETCH OF DR. ARNOLD IN HIS PULPIT AT RUGBY.

"The oak pulpit standing out by itself above the school seats. The tall gallant form, the kindling eye, the voice, now soft as the low notes of a flute, now clear and stirring as the call of the light infantry bugle, of him who stood there Sunday after Sunday witnessing and pleading for his Lord, the King of righteousness and love, and glory, with whose spirit he was filled, and in whose power he spoke. The long lines of young faces, rising tier above tier, down the whole length of the chapel; from the little boy's who had just left his mother, to the young man's who was going out next week into the great world rejoicing in his strength. It was a great and solemn sight, and never more so than at this time of year, when the only lights in the chapel were in the pulpit, and at the seats of the preceptors of the week, and the soft twilight stole over the rest of the chapel, deepening into darkness in the high gallery behind the organ.

But what was it after all which seized and held these three hundred boys, dragging them out of themselves, willing or unwilling, for twenty minutes, on Sunday afternoons? True, there always were boys scattered up and down the school, who in heart and head

were worthy to hear, and able to carry away the deepest and wisest words there spoken. But these were a minority always, generally a very small one, often so small a one as to be countable on the fingers of your hand. What was it that moved and held us, the rest of the three hundred reckless, childish boys, who feared the Doctor with all our hearts, and very little besides in heaven or earth; who thought more of our sets in the school than of the Church of Christ, and put the traditions of Rugby, and the public opinion of boys in our daily life above the laws of God? We couldn't enter into half that we heard; we hadn't the knowledge of our own hearts, or the knowledge of one another; and little enough of the faith, hope, and love, needed to that end. But we listened, as all boys in their better moods will listen (yea, and men, too, for the matter of that), to a man who we felt to be, with all his heart and soul and strength, striving against whatever was mean, and unmanly, and unrighteous in our little world. It was not the cold clear voice of one giving advice and warning from serene heights to those who were struggling and sinning below, but the warm living voice of one who was fighting for us and by our sides, and calling on to us to

help him and ourselves and one another. And so, wearily and little by little, but surely and steadily on the whole, was brought home to the young boy, for the first time, the meaning of his life; that it was no fool's or sluggard's paradise into which he had wandered by chance, but a battle field ordained from of old, where there are no spectators, but the youngest must take his side, and the stakes are life and death. And he who roused this consciousness in them, showed them at the same time, by every word he spoke in the pulpit, and by his whole daily life, how that battle was to be fought; and stood there before them their fellow-soldier and the captain of their band. The true sort of captain, too, for a boy's army; one who had no misgivings and gave no uncertain word of command, and, let who would yield or make truce, would fight the fight out (so every boy felt) to the last gasp and the last drop of blood. Other sides of his character might take hold of and influence boys here and there, but it was this thoroughness and undaunted courage which more than anything else won his way to the hearts of the great mass of those on whom he left his mark, and made them believe first in him, and then in his Master."

THOMAS HUGHES, M.P.

Theological Notes and Queries.

OPEN COUNCIL.

[The utmost freedom of honest thought is permitted in this department. The reader must therefore use his own discriminating faculties, and the Editor must be allowed to claim freedom from responsibility.]

BAPTISM.

To aid "Inquirer" in his search for "the Gospel idea of Baptism," allow me to raise a few questions upon the extract you append as a reply to his inquiry, pp. 175, 176.

1. In the list of passages enumerated by Mr. Godwin as mentioning "the baptism of the body with water," has he not omitted the most important one, viz., our Saviour's commission to his disciples in Matt. xxviii. 19, 20, "Go ye therefore, and teach (disciple) all nations, baptising them," &c. ? Is not the baptism there commanded by Christ "the baptism of the body with water" ? It cannot be the baptism of which He spoke in Mark x. 29 ; Luke xii. 50 ; and which his disciples were to share with Him, because it was to be administered by them to their converts. It cannot be the baptism of the Holy Ghost, because it was to be administered in the name of the Holy Ghost. What other baptism, then, could it be ?

2. Does not that passage fix the nature and use of the rite as a baptism of the body with water, to be administered in the name of the Trinity by Christian teachers to those whom they disciple in the Christian faith, and personally obligatory on all such, in every age and nation ?

3. Has not the "assumption" that in "the figurative expressions of the apostles," in the passages quoted by Mr. G., "there is a reference made to immersions

in water," received the support of some of the ripest scholars of every age ? Dr. Crawford, of Edinburgh University, in his recent work on "The Fatherhood of God," after quoting the same passages, writes : "It ought to be remembered that the cases of baptism which are referred to in the above passages were cases not of baptism administered in infancy, like those with which alone we are ordinarily conversant, but of baptism administered to persons of mature age, who had been converted from Judaism or from heathenism, and who, on making an intelligent and deliberate profession of their faith in Jesus Christ, had been solemnly received into the communion of the Christian Church." (Second edition, p. 307.) He therefore regards them not as "figurative expressions," but as allusions to "*cases*" of a literal burial by baptism.

4. In the absence of demonstrative apostolic teaching to the contrary, is not "the authority of the Fathers of the third century for immersion" (which Mr. G. admits) strong presumptive evidence in favour of its being the apostolic practice ?

5. In the "Jewish law" laid down in Levit. xv. 5, xvii. 15, 16 ; Num. xix. 7 ; for "purifications, called in Heb. ix. 10, "baptisms," is there not something more commanded than "the washing of the hands and feet" ?

6. In the assertion that "all the evidence brought forward re-

specting the practice of immersion by Jews or Christians is of a date comparatively recent," has not Mr. G. overlooked the evidence of Justin Martyr (140), Tertullian (200), Ambrose (374), Augustine (398), with others? Does he call these of a date *comparatively recent*? Has he not forgotten his own admission a few lines before, that "for immersions in water there is the authority of the Fathers of the *third century*"?

7. What authority has Mr. G. for rendering *συνειδήσεως ἀγαθῆς ἐπερώρημα*, "the pursuit of a good conscience"? Is not the primary

meaning of *συνειδήσεως* a question, an interrogation? Is it not also used to signify the mutual return of question and answer which implies compact? Have we not in this apostolic expression a beautiful description of the Gospel use of baptism as laid down by Christ in Matt. xxviii. 19, 20?

There are some other statements in the extract I should like to challenge, but I think the questions I have now raised will suffice for "Inquirer's" guidance for the present. ΠΡΟΣΕΧ.

Literary Notices.

[We hold it to be the duty of an Editor either to give an early notice of the books sent to him for remark, or to return them at once to the Publisher. It is unjust to praise worthless books; it is robbery to retain unnoticed ones.]

THE REVIEWER'S CANON.

In every work regard the author's end,
Since none can compass more than they intend.

WHOSE ARE THE FATHERS? By JOHN HARRISON. London: Longman Green and Co.

THE object of this book is to institute an inquiry into the doctrine held by certain members of the Established Church, that an uninterrupted stream of grace has come down to the English Church from Christ through the apostles, exclusively by the episcopal office, and that, without such grace, so communicated, there cannot be a valid Church and valid sacraments. The High Churchman has invariably considered that in the assertion of that doctrine he has been supported by the authority of the teaching of the Fathers, and that his own position was, therefore, unassailable. Those of his opponents who have entered into controversy with him, have frequently been content, for various reasons, to permit that assumption to pass unchallenged, and in dealing with the argument, have directed attention more to absurdities which its acceptance would logically involve, than to the evidence which can be adduced of its having received the sanction of antiquity. Mr. Harrison meets the High Churchman on different grounds. He joins

issue with him on matters of fact. He challenges him to produce the authorities whose evidence he has been relying on. He does more. He himself produces that evidence, and shows that it is fatal to the interests of the very men who consider themselves secure in its strength. He examines the teachings of the Fathers of the first six centuries, and arrays them against the party who have hitherto appealed to them for sanction and support. He maintains that these teachings show that the apostolic office is not transmissible, and that no Church rulers were called apostles in the same sense that the twelve apostles were so called. Of course if Mr. Harrison can be convicted of wrong translation, or of suppression of material passages, there is an end to the strength of his position. But if, as we feel assured, nothing of that kind can be brought home to him, it must be conceded that his book is the most powerful instrument ever yet directed against the party whose pretensions will thus have been exposed. One thing is very certain. Mr. Harrison has raised a definite issue. The work cannot be discussed by those who do not agree with it on the ground that it merely contains the personal opinions of an opponent. It is a copious and learned dictionary of authorities, and on that account must, except in the circumstances we have indicated, stand out from amidst the strife of mere party argument with abiding power. The labour imposed upon Mr. Harrison by this undertaking has evidently been immense. He has spared no pains, and he has brought together everything which industry, scholarship, research, and a keen intellect could suggest to make it worthy of its high aim, and of his own reputation. Many of the quotations are necessarily the result of hours of reading, and of a familiar intimacy with the writings of the authors from whom they come. In the arrangement of the book, and in the classification of its subjects, a sound judgment, and wise discrimination are manifest. *The Catena Patrum* is deserving of particular observation. It contains extracts from fifty-four Fathers of the first six centuries, and three of a more recent date, concerning the Church and its ministry and other collateral matters. Mr. Harrison is of opinion that a careful consideration of the questions with which he deals, and a close investigation of his authorities, will inevitably conduct to the conclusion, that the teaching of certain Anglo-Catholics, on the Church and its Ministry, is contrary alike to the Holy Scriptures, to the Fathers of the first six centuries, and to those of the Reformed Church of England. We have had before us a very large number of publications on the Ritualistic question, some of them having but little value, and others being marked by much learning and ability. We incline to the belief that the work now before us will be of more permanent service than any even the best of the latter class. It strikes at the root of the tree, and, as the author says, does not attempt to pluck off its leaves. For "Ritualism is the natural and legitimate fruit" of the Anglican

Doctrine on the Christian Ministry which Mr. Harrison herein demolishes. We heartily commend "Whose are the Fathers?" to all our readers who wish to have a masterly, exhaustive, and scholarly work on the subjects to which it refers.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF EVANGELICALISM. Second Edition. London : Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

THE point sought to be established in this essay the author tells us is, "That Christianity, considered as the doctrine of 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,' is a primitive element in the world's moral constitution." The innermost principle of the book he thus describes: "That all true and saving faith in the Christian atonement is intuitional. More at large, it is as follows, viz. :— Humanity is constituted so as to IMPLICATE us not only in our own personal moral acts, but also in the moral acts of each other; *and in consequence thereof*, conscience in its higher exercises extends beyond the sphere of our individual conduct, and is sympathetically affected by others' conduct. The extension of these principles to their utmost degree unfolds the true theory of the sufferings of Christ for our guilt and of our participation in his perfect righteousness. By virtue of his UNION with us in *moral consciousness*, a clear avenue is opened between the Christ consciousness and the human consciousness, and we detect, in the inter-communion, the record of the atoning act and the believing act. Our Saviour, conscious of our sins, has taken them upon Himself and atoned for them; we, conscious of his righteousness, appear with it in the sight of God and are justified. Our sins are his sins, his righteousness our righteousness, *and this union of Christ and his people in moral consciousness is the CENTRAL IDEA OF THE GOSPEL.*" This work has suggested to us questions, the discussion of which would occupy a volume larger than itself. There are many points in our author's reasoning that do not satisfy either our philosophy, intuitions, or creed. At the same time we put a high value on the work. The author is evidently a man of rare intelligence and ability. His psychological knowledge in the light of which he conducts his argument, is remarkably clear and comprehensive. A book more thorough in its investigations, more vigorous and unfettered in thought, more suggestive in character, and manly in bearing, seldom comes to us from the evangelical quarters of literature.

AN AUTUMN DREAM: On the Intermediate State of Happy Spirits. By JOHN SHEPPARD. Third Edition. London: Elliott Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

THE venerable author of this book is well known in the more elevated fields of sacred literature. In those fields he has planted many a seed

that will blossom with beauty, and cluster with fruit for many years to come. The author's conscious approach to the great spirit world, prompted this "autumn dream." "We are," he says, "fast going out of this world, and it would be marvellous if thoughtful minds were not often and earnestly enquiring about the next." In introducing this, the third edition, he says, "The dream of life's autumn is thus again offered in the winter of age, chiefly from the motive that it can be best revised by the writer's own mind and hand which may both be, ere long, less equal to the task." The thoughts which are here clad in poetic garb, and march in the music of verse, are truly full of spiritual inspiration. The volume contains, beside the poem, extracts from the works of some of our best authors on the separate state and on the immateriality of mind. This book will be a valuable present to thoughtful Christians, especially to those who feel themselves drawing near to the Great World.

THE PRESENT RELATIONS OF CHURCH AND STATE IN ENGLAND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TEACHINGS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE. By the REV. GEORGE G. LAURENCE, M.A., Oxford. London: Wm Macintosh, 24, Paternoster Row.

THIS work is divided into ten chapters, the subjects of which are—The Meaning of the term Established Church, The Different kinds of Established Churches, The Advantages and alleged Disadvantages of an Established Church, Church Property not National Property, The Unreasonable and bitter Spirit shown by some Nonconformists, &c., &c. The HOMILIST does not adjudicate on those points, either ecclesiastical or theological, which divide Christian Churches, nor has it ever had any sympathy, with that kind of nonconformity which this book criticises and condemns. We heartily join the author of this work and say, "Do not take anything for granted, simply because it is affirmed by this or that party leader, but rather follow the precept of the inspired apostle, 'Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.'"

FORM OR FREEDOM: Five Colloquies on Liturgies. By SAMUEL CLARKSON. Second Edition. Manchester: Henry H. Tubbs, 21, King Street. London: Jackson, Walford and Hodder.

WE do not think that Mr. Clark has done justice to "The Biblical Liturgy." He does not state that it contains a large variety of services, each made up entirely of Scripture passages, nor does he state that its object is not to supersede, but to stimulate extemporaneous prayer. Indeed, he would convey an opposite impression, that it is a form as opposed to freedom. What does he mean by form? What can he either get or communicate without form? Are not chapters in the Bible, forms? Are no hymns, forms? Are not sermons, forms? Our

own impression is, that there is far more freedom in liturgical, than what is considered extemporaneous, devotions. There are hundreds of Nonconformist ministers who are anxious to have a liturgy, but are not manly enough to introduce one.

REMARKABLE FACTS. Illustrative and Confirmatory of different portions of Holy Scripture. By the Rev. J. LEIFCHILD, D.D. With a Preface by his Son. London: Jackson, Walford and Hodder, 27, Paternoster Row.

DR. LEIFCHILD, whose memory is dear to thousands yet living, informs us in his preface—that, in the course of his ministry he met with numerous incidents of providential interposition which he recorded at the time, for his own use, and by which he was directed, encouraged, and animated, in his work. This volume contains a selection from these, and many of them certainly are very striking, and admirably suited to illustrate to the mind, and to convey to the heart certain passages on the Holy Word; for this purpose they are used in the volume. The work will be read with interest, and with profit.

THE ORDINANCE OF LEVITES. By JAMES SUTTER. Edinburgh: William P. Nimmo. London: Simpkin, Marshall & Gill.

THE purpose of this publication, we are informed, is to recommend a modification of the ancient and honourable, and liberal, tribute of tithes to old age, instead of the modern and stinted alms to aged destitution. The author states his propositions, as parts of a proposed Act of Parliament. The object of the book is most philanthropic, and the scheme whether practicable, or not, is most ingenious. The volume contains a great deal of interesting calculation, and very much useful information.

THE HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES OF BRENTWOOD AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD. By REV. H. P. BOWEN. Brentwood: W. Corden, High Street.

THE substance of this pamphlet was given in the form of a lecture. In its present form it is a very interesting handbook of Brentwood and its neighbourhood. Though its interest is specially local, it sketches men, and records events well deserving the study of all. The work indicates considerable historic research, and literary ability of a superior order.







